INDIA

A Record and Review of Indian Affairs

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Indiana.

The Mansion House Fund.

THE present number of INDIA is occupied chiefly with two subjects—the famine, and the twelfth Congress. Even so it has been found impossible to present anything like an adequate record, much less an adequate review, of either. We can only hope to have called attention to some facts and points of view which are too frequently overlooked. It is a common, and just, complaint that important events and expressions of opinion in India meet with something less than justice at the hands of the British Press. So far, at any rate, as mere volume of discussion is concerned, this criticism does not hold good in the case of the appalling famine which has set everybody talking, and many people thinking, about India. If the critics have not always probed very far below the surface, and have sometimes confused the symptom with the cause of disease, that was only to be expected. The fact remains that the present calamity has provoked a good deal of searching of heart in the United Kingdom, and has, on no mean scale, directed public attention to the really vital problems of Indian administration. In our last number we urged Lord George Hamilton to reconsider his replies to the Lord Mayor of London, and to the Lancashire Cotton Duties Committee, in which he discouraged an immediate appeal to public liberality. The Mansion House Fund and the Lancashire Fund have since been opened, after deplorable and almost inexplicable delay. It may be well, for the sake of clearness, to set out in the form of a diary the events which preceded Lord G. Hamilton's recantation :—

1896.

December 18.—Viceroy telegraphs: "In North-Western Provinces test relief works and poor-houses opened in seven new districts. . . . . Total number of persons on relief 494,200."

December 21.—Lord G. Hamilton dissuades the Lord Mayor from opening the Mansion House Fund. "The Government of India recommend that for the present no action should be taken in this country to raise subscriptions."

December 22.—Lord G. Hamilton, in the same terms, dissuades the Lancashire Committee from opening a fund.

December 25.—Viceroy telegraphs: "no rain in affected tracts during past week. . . . . Total on relief 531,900. Figures incomplete for Punjab, Central India, and Bombay."

December 28.—Conference, under the presidency of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, of Indians resident in Great Britain, unanimously adopts resolution calling upon the Lord Mayor to open the Mansion House Fund.

December 29.—The *Daily Chronicle* prints letter, dated December 26, from Sir W. Wedderburn M.P, "Why delay the Indian Famine Relief Fund?"

December 30.—The INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS at Calcutta unanimously adopts strong resolutions on the famine, and authorises its President to cable to the India Office and the Lord Mayor, urging an immediate appeal for public subscriptions.

On the same day an Indian deputation, headed by

Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, waits upon the Lord Mayor and presents the resolution of December 28. The Lord Mayor replies that "almost his first act after entering office was to place himself at the entire disposal of the Indian authorities to raise a Mansion House Fund. He could not fly in the face of the Indian Government."

1897.

January 1.—Lord G. Hamilton writes to Lord Kinnaird: "I have not said that the famine and scarcity now prevailing in India do not warrant an appeal to the public, nor have I used any words capable of such interpretation."

January 6.—Lord G. Hamilton writes to a correspondent: "The Government of India are now engaged in formulating the basis for an appeal to the public."

January 7.—The Viceroy states in the Imperial Legislative Council that he proposes to preside at a meeting in Calcutta for the purpose of appealing for subscriptions, and that the meeting will be closely followed by a meeting in London.

January 8.—Lord G. Hamilton writes to the Lord Mayor: "The Indian Government have now sent home the information I was awaiting."

The Lord Mayor writes to the newspapers, and the Mansion House Fund is opened.

Lord G. Hamilton's Recantation.

THIS diary suggests many questions—and, first, the question, What was it that caused Lord G. Hamilton, in the early days of January, to repent the attitude which he had maintained throughout December? There can be no doubt or hesitation as to the answer. He was goaded by the strong criticisms of the newspapers — goaded in their turn by the admirable resolutions of the Indian National Congress. Even the organs of Lord G. Hamilton's own political party turned against him, including the faithful—not to say thick-skinned—*St. James's Gazette*. Here is the text of the resolutions, as telegraphed by Reuter, which the Congress unanimously adopted on December 30:—

"In the fourth resolution the Congress deplores the outbreak of an acute famine throughout India, declaring that this and other famines are due to the great poverty of the people resulting from the drain of wealth which has continued for many years owing to excessive taxation and over assessment consequent upon a policy of extravagance in the civil and military departments, so impoverishing the people that at the first touch of scarcity the helpless must perish unless fed by the State.

"The Congress declares that the true remedy is the adoption of a policy enforcing economy, the husbanding of the resources of the State, and the fostering of Indian arts and industries now virtually extinguished. The Congress reminds the Government of its solemn duty to save life and mitigate suffering, and appeals to it to redeem its pledges by restoring the famine insurance fund to its original purpose of the relief of the famine-stricken.

"In view of the fact that private charity in England is ready to flow freely at this awful juncture, and also that large classes of the sufferers can only be reached by private charity, the Congress protests emphatically against the manner in which the Indian Government blocks the way, and earnestly hopes that the disastrous mistake committed by Lord Lytton's Government will not now be repeated.

"The fifth resolution authorised the President to cable to the India Office and to the Lord Mayor urging the immediate opening of public subscriptions. All these resolutions were passed unanimously."

The publication of these resolutions in the newspapers was followed by an outburst of public feeling hardly less strong than that which greeted the "masterpiece of melancholy meanness" last summer. For example, on January 4th, the *Daily News* wrote:—

"'Special machinery,' it seems, 'has to be established for the receipt, distribution, and supervision of all money subscribed.' Then why was it not established long ago? This famine has not taken the Indian Government by surprise. They have been prepared for it three months."

On the same day the *St. James's Gazette* said:—

"We wish the Secretary of State to give us a plain statement of his intentions. Does he think a Famine Fund ought to be started, or does he not?"

On January 5th, the *Daily Chronicle*, which has discussed the famine with commendable vigour day after day, wrote:—

"We do not envy him [Lord G. Hamilton] the responsibility he has assumed in stopping the full flow of the charities of the British people, when American newspapers are appealing to their readers for help to the Indian rayat."

The *Manchester Guardian* wrote on the same day:—

"There is no need to wait for a sign from the India Office. The emergency is already plain enough, and as a certain interval must necessarily elapse before the movement for establishing a relief fund can be well on its way, the sooner it is begun the better."

And the *Star* said:—

"We can assure the Lord Mayor of this—that unless he acts immediately the matter will, for the time being at any rate, be taken out of his hands. He must therefore do, without delay, one of two things. Either he must persuade Lord G. Hamilton to remove his monstrous veto upon the charity of the nation; or he must ignore the India Office and follow the promptings of humanity. We strongly urge him to take the second course without another day's delay."

Lord G Hamilton bowed before the storm. If there could have been any doubt as to the efficient cause of his recantation, he would have removed it once for all in the speech which he delivered at the Acton Conservative Club on January 13th. That speech—one of the most amazing diatribes ever delivered by a Cabinet Minister—was simply a petulant attack upon the Press. Lord G. Hamilton apparently did not perceive that in contrasting the newspapers of to-day with the newspapers of twenty years ago, so far as Indian affairs are concerned, he was merely paying a compliment to their vigour and information.

A Circumlocution Office.

WE need not dwell upon Lord G. Hamilton's unfortunate attempt to persuade Lord Kinnaird and the public that the India Office was not responsible for

the delay of the Mansion House Fund. But it is worth noting that the despatch from the Government of India, printed in the highly unsatisfactory Blue-book which has been presented to Parliament, and describing the objects to which private subscriptions may legitimately be devoted, is dated December 23rd. In that despatch the Government of India writes:—

"We feel assured that the suffering which, in spite of all that the Government may do to relieve it, must necessarily be in store during the next few months for many millions of her Majesty's subjects, will deeply move the sympathies of the British public; and we are convinced that it needs but an indication on your lordship's part that money will be gratefully received and can be usefully applied, to ensure a generous response from that liberality of which India has already had experience, and of which she still preserves a grateful recollection."

It was a week after these words were written that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and his friends appealed in vain to the Lord Mayor to open the Fund, and it was yet a fortnight later that Lord G. Hamilton, in his speech at Acton, regretted the "hysterical" tone of newspapers which had commented upon the procrastination of the India Office. It is no less difficult to understand the grounds of that procrastination. Lord G. Hamilton, alike in his speech at Acton on January 13th and in his speech at the Mansion House on January 16th, essayed to explain it. He had been waiting for a wonderful scheme which he and the Government of India had been "endeavouring to consider" for "some months past." "We have been considering," he said "by what methods charity could be made really effective," and he described at some length the grave communications which had passed between himself and the Viceroy, and between the Viceroy and the local governments in India. Well, we can only say that the mountains, after the travails of this protracted labour, gave birth to a singularly ridiculous mouse. For the "scheme" is appended to the despatch of December 23rd, and it has simply been "lifted" from the Famine Report of 1880—an operation which any junior clerk at the India Office could without any undue strain upon his faculties have accomplished in half an hour at any time within the past twenty-six years.

Incorrigible Optimism.

THE wonder is that the Government of India did not invite the aid of private charity at least three months ago. For as Lord George Hamilton writes in his despatch of January 15th:—

"At the beginning of November it was apparent that, if the cold weather rainfall should be wanting, there must be serious famine over a large area of India, inhabited perhaps by eighty to ninety millions of people, and that it would be most severely felt in the North-West Provinces."

In other words, so soon as the occurrence of famine became certain, or even highly probable, an appeal ought to have been made for private charity which, far from interfering or competing with State relief, would merely have supplemented it. It may perhaps be asked, what is the use of calling further attention to this melancholy episode? The use of it is that the India Office has exhibited on this occasion its incorrigible optimism, and the public in this country, after so signal a warning, ought in future to look with jealous suspicion upon the roseate official views which, in less conspicuous though equally important matters, it it is only too willing to accept without question, and without reference to Indian opinion and demands.

The Member for Anglo-India.

THE name of Mr. M. M. Bhownaggree, M.P., has not often been mentioned in our columns—for two reasons, about which we may be perfectly frank. In the first place, we are reluctant to call public attention to unbecoming conduct on the part of any Indian. In the second place, we have no intention of advertising into a fictitious prominence a person who, however cordially he may be distrusted and disliked in India, attracts very little attention of any sort in this country. During the recess Mr. Bhownaggree, who (to borrow an apt expression from the *Daily Chronicle*) is "a sort of Indian counterpart to the Belfast Liberal Unionist," went out to India. He obtained a warm, a very warm, reception. Educated Indians in all parts of the country lost no time in repudiating the claims, and rejecting the advances, of one whom they believed, rightly or wrongly, to have subordinated the interests of his country to the sordid game of currying favour with the ruling classes in England. *Hinc illae lacrimae.* This was not the sort of ovation which Mr. Bhownaggree had hoped for. But it explains the undisguised bitterness of his speech in the House of Commons (January 26th) upon Sir W. Wedderburn's amendment to the Address. The able and discriminating writer of the Parliamentary Sketch in the *Manchester Guardian* described Mr. Bhownaggree's share in that discussion as follows:—

"The comic relief to the debate was supplied by Mr. Bhownaggree. When Mr. Naoroji was defeated at the general election and Mr. Bhownaggree selected, an attempt was made to secure for the new-comer the succession to the honourable place in the regard of the House of Commons which Mr. Naoroji had secured. The attempt quickly failed. It was promptly made clear to the House that Mr. Bhownaggree was repudiated, or rather had never been, and was not likely to be, accepted by the representative body of natives in India as their spokesman, and the member himself showed that he only intended to use his Indian name and birth against any native movement which was distasteful to the Government of India. To-day he carried this attitude a little further by attempting

to bespatter Sir W. Wedderburn and his colleague, with abuse of a nature which is seldom heard in Parliamentary debates. The House listened to this tirade with a pained tolerance, for the House is traditionally extremely tolerant to the mistakes or failures of any member who suffers under any disadvantage of birth, education, or experience. It is only noteworthy as presenting a striking contrast to the impression made by Mr. Naoroji upon the House. Mr. Naoroji had some prejudices to overcome when he entered the House as a stranger, and nothing helped him to rise quickly to a high place more than the discovery that, whatever his nationality, he had in a high degree all the best of the qualities which go to make that House of Commons ideal 'an English gentleman.' Mr. Schwann disposed of Mr. Bhownaggree's attack to-day in a few contemptuous phrases."

Yes, it must be admitted that Mr. Bhownaggree made a melancholy exhibition of himself. But, after all, it is by no means a disadvantage that he should have spoken out. It is, no doubt, the unskilful actor that overplays his part. But then it is to the public advantage that some actors should be unskilful. Mr. Bhownaggree—who, oddly enough, "approves of the Congress," though he has a curious way of showing his approval—threatens to reduce members like Sir A. Scoble and Sir J. Fergusson to the ranks of the unemployed. For, while Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji was "the member for India," Mr. Bhownaggree apparently seeks to be "the member for Anglo-India." We have only two suggestions to offer. He should be made a K.C.I.E. without further delay. And he should place his stores of erudition at the disposal of Lord Welby's Commission on Indian Expenditure.

India and the Amír.

MR. J. DACOSTA writes: "The contention which has for the last eight months disturbed our relations with the ruler of Afghanistan may any day result in an open rupture, seeing that the aims pursued by the two parties are widely divergent, and that each is well acquainted with the antagonist motive which actuates the other. The British have declared, and manifested by their acts, that their settled policy aims at the military occupation of the region lying between India and the Russian Empire. Abdar Ráhman has, with equal publicity, declared that the Afghan tribes called him to the throne for the protection of their country against the intrusion of *Kafirs*, or infidels, a term which they apply to the British and the Russians alike. The present dispute with Abdar Ráhman arose from a body of Afghan troops having, early last summer, invaded the Mittai valley which, according to our reading of the Durand treaty, fell to India and is 'indisputably included within the limits of British territory' (*Times*, 2nd January, 1897). We protested against that movement, and intimated our interpretation of the treaty to the Afghan Commander-in-chief, whose answer was that the troops had marched by the Amír's order and could be recalled only under instructions from that sovereign. We then informed the Amír that we regarded his invasion of the Mittai valley as an infraction of the Durand treaty, and we proposed the appointment of a joint Commission for the demarcation of the boundary line separating our respective dominions in that region. The Amír has, to this day, neither appointed delegates for the Commission proposed by us, nor recalled his troops from the Mittai valley. The Afghan advance is particularly offensive to us, because (1) it violates our treaty; (2) it imperils our communications with Chitral; and (3) it is a direct menace to our proclaimed and subsidised ally, the Khan of Nawagai, who assisted us in our Chitral expedition, and whom we engaged to protect. Moreover, 'it would obviously not be to our advantage to let him think that the Amír of Afghanistan is a more powerful neighbour than the Government of India' (*Times*, 18th September, 1896). On the other hand, looking at the circumstances which must influence the Amír in the present dispute, we find that the Mittai valley is situate in the heart of the Momand territory, and that the boundary line we contend for would divide that territory into two sections, one of which we propose to leave subject to the Amír's influence, while we claim the right of bringing the other under British control. Now, for Abdar Ráhman to renounce the right of protecting Momand tribesmen who are essentially Afghans, and whose chief, the Khan of Lalpura, is a vassal of the Amír, would constitute a violation of the oath taken by Abdar Ráhman, when he ascended the throne, binding him to protect the country in the name of Islam against all infidel encroachments. Should the Amír, therefore, comply with our demands, he would become, in the eyes of his subjects, a traitor and an infidel, unworthy to reign, and deserving of death.

Is it to be War?

"A DISPASSIONATE consideration of the Amír's circumstances, and of the influences which move us in this dispute, may lead to the conclusion that the arbitration of war alone can settle the difference between us. But let us not forget that interests and aims equally important and conflicting were involved in a recent dispute with Abdar Ráhman, when it was threatened, in a leading article in the *Times*, of November 2nd, 1892, that, unless he fell in with our settled frontier policy, Afghanistan as a kingdom would disappear. The Amír remained obdurate; yet the Afghan kingdom has survived. We brought about that result through the Kabul conference of 1893, and the Durand treaty, which raised the Amír's annual subsidy, payable out of the Indian treasury, to Rs. [illegible],800,000. Indeed, supporters of the Calcutta Foreign Office policy have not unfrequently vaunted the power of 'astute diplomacy and the mighty

rupee' as an auxiliary for surmounting obstacles; and we freely resorted to *douceurs* in the Afghan war of 1878-80, and in our numerous trans-frontier expeditions—notably in Waziristan where we reckoned on a host of purchased 'friendlies.' Their support, however, proved in every instance to be untrustworthy; and our disaster at Wano, four years ago, when the Waziris attacked the British camp, carrying off our treasure and our best horses, has been ascribed to the treachery of the 'friendly' chiefs, who were admitted into our camp, and are suspected of having disclosed our camp arrangements to the foe. It is earnestly to be desired, in view of the experience we have had, that bribery will not be resorted to for the settlement of the present dispute. At the same time, the following passage in a leading article of the *Times*, of the 2nd January, cannot be read without deep concern on the subject. The writer, referring to the fanaticism with which Momands may resist our efforts to bring them under British control, says:

> But all these Pathan tribes have their price, and there is an old Border saying that, with the Momands, you can do what you like if you put a rupee in your eye.

Our 'scientific' or 'forward' frontier policy has, since 1876, absorbed many millions of Indian revenue, in subsidies and military charges, greatly increased the public debt, and led to oppressive taxation, which has disabled millions of our Indian fellow-subjects from bearing the pressure of the present scarcity; while the progress achieved in that aggressive policy, at so ruinous a cost, is limited to our precarious hold of Chitral—an acquisition financially and strategically worthless—to our presence on sufferance at New Chaman, and to the occupation of a few spots in the Eastern borderland of Afghanistan, where the safety of our isolated garrison is constantly endangered by the fanatic hatred and hostility evinced by the surrounding tribes. The *Pioneer*, of 31st December, and the *Times*, of 2nd January, contain articles in support of the British interpretation of the Durand treaty; but as that document makes no mention of a division of the Momand territory having been agreed to by both parties, the public have no means of arriving at a conviction on the point at issue, except the opinions promulgated by irresponsible supporters of one of the parties. The Amír evidently impugns the correctness of our interpretation, since he has abstained from conforming to it, although he professes full adherence to all the conditions of the treaty. The same papers state that, at a large meeting, convened by the Commissioner of Peshawar, of Momands who reside in the section of territory claimed by us as British, the negotiations concluded with the tribal assent to our claim. At the same time the *Pioneer* warns us that the Momands are conspicuous, even among Afghans, for faithlessness, pride, and fanaticism. The above-mentioned articles are certainly calculated to raise a hope that the Indian Government will soon be able to overcome the difficulty of settling the present dispute. At the same time the actual facts mentioned in them scarcely afford ground for confidently relying on such expectations."

How India is "Bled."

WE give below the statistics of India's foreign trade for the six months ending with September, compared with those for corresponding half-years in the two previous years. Those who wish to follow up the comparison may turn to our last July number (p. 197) where the total for the three full years ending March last are given. Also in our January number (p. 11) may be seen the totals for the five years ending March last. In the latter table the figures for gold and silver on both sides of the account are separately shown. Though not there worked out, it will be seen that the aggregate excess of India's commercial outgoings over her incomings, in the period, amounted to the enormous sum of Rx. 154,875,974.

Seaborne Trade of British India during Six Months ending with September.

	1896.	1895.	1894.
EXPORTS:—			
Merchandise	Rs.50,01,18,950	52,18,25,642	53,62,27,690
Treasure	2,80,01,607	2,29,64,480	5,08,03,999
	52,81,20,557	54,47,90,122	58,70,31,689
IMPORTS:—			
Merchandise	38,54,36,841	33,72,16,123	34,70,40,266
Treasure	6,23,96,504	5,97.17,841	5,12,18,562
	Rs. 44,78,33,345	39,69,33,964	39,82,59,828
India's Excess of Exports	Rx. 8,028,721	14,785,615	18,877,186

Thus, during these three *half*-years India has sent out an aggregate of over Rx. 41½ millions worth of her produce and resources for which she received no commercial return whatever. If it be queried whether to take only half the years, as in these figures, may give partial results, an answer is ready: on turning to similar statistics given in our July number for the three full years ending with March last, it will be seen that the total excess of India's exports for that period was Rx. 83½ millions, just twice the total brought out above for the three half-years cited. The only remark pertinent to these later figures is that in the half-year ending with September, the merchandise exports had, because of the drought—affecting seeds and other non-edible products—already fallen off, while the flow of imports had not then been checked by the falling off in demand, which will have since become painfully manifest. This explains how the excess of exports in the last of the three half-years is appreciably less than in the former two.* When the full year comes to be cast up at the end of next March, we may

expect to see a considerable falling off on both sides of India's trade transactions; though as the Secretary of State's drawings must, perforce, be lessened now, the excess of exports will be less than usual. This in itself is a significant anomaly.

"The Thackerays in India."

SIR W. W. Hunter's charming volume, "The Thackerays in India" (Henry Frowde), serves to remind us that perhaps no country has absorbed more silently and more persistently the best blood of its conquerors than has India. From the days of the old Company until now there has been a ceaseless stream of Englishmen who have lived and worked and died in India. There are indeed few families in England now which are not bound to India by some personal tie. But the family interest in India which used to be so conspicuous has to a great extent ceased. Partly, no doubt, it was due to the influence necessary to secure an appointment in the Company's Service, but not entirely to that. "The Indian Civil Service," says Sir W. Hunter, "has found no annalist." The present volume is a brief sketch of a typical Anglo-Indian family in the old days. "The first Thackery in India went as a covenanted civilian, in 1776, and four of his sons, with at least fourteen of his descendants and collaterals, have been traced in the same profession." This William Makepeace Thackeray, grandfather of the novelist, went as a writer in the East India Company's Service in his seventeenth year. At that time it was usual for the Company's servants to augment their small incomes by private trade, and Thackeray was soon engaged in the lucrative employment of obtaining elephants for the service. At the end of nine years his fortune was large enough for him to return to England. Shortly before his return he married Amelia Richmond-Webb, daughter of Lieut.-Colonel Richmond-Webb, and descended from the General Webb whom her own great descendant has sketched in "Esmond." The Thackerays settled at Hadley where a sister was also living, and there William Thackeray "lived a simple but hospitable country life. A great digger in his garden, if nieces bantered him on his somewhat rural clothes, he replied, 'my dears, as I do not like the trouble of choosing, I tell my tailor to send me at one time this coloured suit, and at another a blue with brass buttons, so that when I write for a new one he looks in his order-book and sees which turn it is.'" He had seven sons, of whom five entered the service of the East India Company. Some of them showed the greatest aptitude for the languages of the country. The eldest was employed soon after his arrival in helping Sir Thomas Munro with the settlement of the district which had been lately ceded to the English by the Nizam, and he showed such ability and insight in the work that he was afterwards called upon to help Sir W. Bentinck in the work of Settlement, and his report on the districts committed to him is a permanent memorial to his capacity and industry.

The Father of the Novelist.

THREE other brothers had shorter, if not less distinguished, careers in India. To the second son, Richmond, the father of the novelist, Sir W. Hunter assigns a separate chapter. He spent the first few years of his life in India in the routine work of a District Collector, greatly changed in its character from the adventurous occupation of his father's day. But he advanced steadily in the service, and coming to Calcutta was no inconspicuous figure in society there. In 1810 he married one of the beauties of the day, whose kinsman, Richard Becher, may well have furnished Thackeray with some suggestions for the character, and pathetic story, of Colonel Newcome. Five years after his marriage Richmond Thackeray died, and was buried in one of those Calcutta graveyards of whose forgotten tombstones Sir W. Hunter tells the story in the first chapter of this book. It is the story of the British in India, of merchant soldiers whose very names are forgotten, of acts of perseverance and heroism, and of the bitterest enmities.

> "How these poor dead people hated their great men! They stoned their prophets: to be mentioned was to be defamed. It is with a sense of relief that we turn from what was said about the founders of the British power in India to what they did. Whatever their failings or their falsehoods the libellers and the libelled lie very quietly with each other now. Here they fear no more the heat of the sun, and in place of the sharp bitings of malice they have but to encounter the toothless maw of the worm."

Here lies Charnock, founder of the City of Palaces, Clavering, one of the first three Councillors in Bengal, here too Rose Aylmer whose beauty and unhappy death Landor has sung. After his father's death William Makepeace Thackeray, then a child four years old, was sent to England, his mother remaining in India. He felt the separation keenly, though it never caused her influence over him to lessen.

> "Divided by half the world the child clung to her memory. When suffering from the tyrant of a private school, 'I remember,' he wrote forty years afterwards, 'kneeling by my little bed at night and saying, "Pray God I may dream of my mother."' The public school boy at Charterhouse wrote almost daily to her a kind of journal. For her the gay young man at Cambridge and Weimar found leisure to compile the most delightful pictorial epistles. The tenderness of that beautiful mother went with him through his whole life."

Sir W. Hunter points out how Thackeray's various characteristics can be traced in his ancestry, and how he drew upon his own history and theirs in writing his novels. But no other influence is so strong as his mother's—it lives in the work of "the manliest and tenderest man of letters of our age."

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

I.—THE HISTORY OF A CRIME.

By Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., M.P.

No one now doubts that an Indian famine is upon us in a most acute form, and all resources public and private must be strained to the utmost in order to mitigate the calamity. But do what we will death and suffering will be widespread. Can nothing be done as regards the future to ward off such disasters? Prevention is better than cure,—much better than mitigation. Cannot something be done beforehand to strengthen the feeble knees of the rayat, to make him more able to resist when the bad time comes? I most firmly believe that much may be done. Also I believe that now is the opportunity to impress this truth upon the public mind. For the attention of the British public is, for the moment at least, directed to India; its sympathy is aroused; and all the death and suffering will not be altogether in vain if the nation can be induced to open its eyes to the true condition of India, to distinguish between the symptoms and the disease, and to insist sternly on the removal of the causes which produce the disease. As a humble contribution towards an understanding of the facts, I put forward the following propositions: I. That the excessive mortality in an Indian famine is due to the extreme poverty of the rural population, who do not possess a store of food, money, or credit, sufficient to tide over one failure of harvest; II. That practically mortality from famine would be prevented if the population had such a store of food, money, or credit; III. That with reasonable reforms in the administration, the rayat would not only be in a position to possess such a store, but he might even become moderately prosperous; IV. That the India Office, as at present constituted, will neither initiate these necessary reforms itself, nor will it allow others to carry them out.

I will not, in my limited space, dwell upon the first two propositions. They stand to reason. For the people do not die out of mere perversity. They die because they are living from hand to mouth, and a failure of harvest finds them without reserve of any kind to fall back upon. The disease from which India is suffering is the chronic destitution of the masses; their precarious existence on the verge of starvation: the failure of a harvest is only the push which sends them down into the abyss. It is clear that the people would not die if they had food in their houses, or if they had cash to buy it, or if they had credit to borrow it. Can the India Office suggest any other reason for people dying of hunger, except the want of these three things? I say that the mass of the cultivators have no store of grain in their houses. They used to have. In the earlier days of my service every rayat, however poor, had an underground store of millet put away, enough to keep his family for a year or two. But these little stores are now impossible, being swept away by the bailiffs in execution of the decrees of the civil debt courts which, to the destruction of the peasantry, we have set up on the English model in the rural districts. Nor are the rayats any better off as regards either cash or credit. They not only possess nothing, but less than nothing, being for the most part hopelessly in debt to the village money-lender.

Passing on then from the two first propositions I proceed to the third, which after all is the most important. For if it can be established that, by administrative reforms, the rayat may be placed in a position to tide over one bad season, then the famine problem will practically be solved. To establish this proposition the public will require something more specific than general statements. Thomas Carlyle used to say, "Give me facts: Feed me with facts"! I will therefore give some facts, the accuracy of which I can guarantee—a modern instance, within my own personal knowledge—and will relate briefly the history of a scheme by which the rayat might, ten years ago, have been relieved from his desperate condition; and might even now be relieved, if the veto of the India Office were removed.

In approaching this subject, the first important fact that the British reader has to realize is that though the rayat is desperately poor, he need not be so, nor ought he to be so. The poet speaks of the "wealth of Ind." The phrase seems a mockery, looking to the present condition of the country. But none the less India possesses the conditions of almost boundless agricultural wealth. In her vast domain she has climates suited to every known product. She has a fertile soil and an unfailing sun, with abundant labour, skilful and cheap. All that is wanted is working capital. Give the rayat that, on reasonable terms, so that he may be able to command a proper supply of water and manure, and he will produce in perfection every valuable crop known to cultivation. But unfortunately at present the rayat, as a class, has no capital. By a harsh and rigid system of land taxation, and by the introduction of debt courts unsuited to the peasantry, we have drained the rayat of capital, and made him the bondslave of the village money-lender. The disorganization and ruin thence resulting cannot be better described than in the words of Sir George Wingate, the father of the Bombay Revenue system:

> "This miserable struggle between the debtor and creditor is," he says, "thoroughly debasing to both. The creditor is made by it a grasping hard-hearted oppressor; the debtor a crouching false-hearted slave. It is disheartening to contemplate, and yet it would be a weakness to conceal the fact, that this antagonism of classes and degradation of the people which is fast spreading over the land, is the work of our laws and our rule."

What the rayat wants is to be delivered from this bondage, "the work of our laws and our rule," and to be supplied with sufficient working capital at reasonable rates. He may then be left alone, for he is sturdy, skilful, and industrious. He will at once proceed to dig a well on his ancestral land, and supply himself with water and manure; and, in the end, he will turn the whole of India into a garden. There will be no talk of famine then. Moreover the rayat will then be able, as he is able in well-governed native states like Mysore, Baroda, Bhaunagar, and Gondal, to pay, contentedly and without difficulty, double that which in British territory is squeezed out of him with so much labour and sorrow.

Now the recognized method of supplying working capital to peasant proprietors is by the establishment of Agricultural Banks. In Germany alone there are some 2000 such banks, doing a business amounting to something like 150 millions sterling, with immense benefit to the rural population. Every other country in Europe has followed the example of Germany; the Autocrat of all the Russias started such banks with liberal support; and even the unspeakable Turk has made some movements in the same direction. In India alone nothing has been done. The Autocrat of the India Office would neither move himself, nor allow others to move. I will state the exact facts showing how he baffled and defeated a moderate and carefully matured proposal to enable the Indian rayat to share in these benefits.

The scheme referred to took shape at Poona in 1882. The object of the promoters, of whom I was one, was to frame a scheme upon the lines of the continental system, while adapting the details to local circumstances. Especially we had to provide for the settlement of old debts; we had to restore the friendly relations between the rayats and the village money-lenders; we had to secure for our project the hearty co-operation of both these classes; and we had to induce the local native capitalists to give us their financial support. Last but not least we had to claim from Government concessions similar to those accorded to such institutions on the Continent of Europe. After much careful enquiry and many local meetings, all the parties concerned agreed to the scheme. The rayats gladly welcomed the proposal; the village money-lenders were prepared to co-operate; and the native bankers were ready to provide capital. A public meeting was then held at Poona under the presidency of the Collector of the District, resolutions were passed for the establishment of an agricultural bank, and an influential Committee was appointed. This Committee waited upon the Governor (Sir James Fergusson) and set forth their proposals for an experimental bank in the Purandhar Taluka of the Poona Collectorate. His Excellency received the deputation in a very cordial manner, expressed himself personally favourable to the scheme, and promised that he and his colleagues would give it their best consideration. Accordingly the scheme was forwarded to the Viceroy in Council, whom it reached at a favourable moment. The Indian Government, as the general landlord, had always desired to help the rayat with loans for land improvement. But from various causes the attempt to make these advances through official agency had failed in every part of India. And the Government had at last come to the conclusion that it must look to private enterprise for any real progress in this direction. The Marquis of Ripon was then Viceroy, and Sir Evelyn Baring (now Lord Cromer) who was Finance Minister, had personal experience of agricultural banks, so that the Poona scheme received immediate and sympathetic consideration, as providing the exact means desired to carry out the Government policy. And a very important despatch, No. 638 of 5th December, 1882, was sent from Simla to the Bombay Government, expressing the satisfaction of the Viceroy in Council with the proposals made, and setting forth in detail the action which the Government were prepared to take. Subject to certain minor conditions, the Government of India accepted the Poona proposals. They were willing to appoint a Commission for the liquidation of the rayats' debts within a limited experimental area; they would advance, in the first instance, the cash (some 6½ lakhs) necessary for the composition of these debts; they would, as regards the bank, remit a part of the stamp duty on documents, and the court fees in suits; and they would concede to the bank the privilege of recovering its advances through the revenue officers on the same footing as advances made by the Government. While granting these important concessions, which are on the lines of those allowed to agricultural banks in Europe, the Government of India was careful to explain to the Bombay Government that similar privileges would not necessarily be granted in future to other similar banks. The Poona bank was, in fact, treated as a pioneer enterprise; the object being to make a practical experiment in a limited area, with the hope that when the system was once established it would spread wherever needed, and, to use the words of the despatch, "prove of incalculable benefit to the whole country." In conclusion, the Government of India stated that they attached very great importance to the experiment, and asked the Bombay Government to undertake the working of the measure. In reply, the Bombay Government, in their despatch of 5th April, 1883, stated their willingness to give the scheme a trial.

In this way, after no little labour and negotiation, every interest and every authority in India was brought into substantial agreement as regards the scheme. And on the 31st of May, 1884, a unanimous despatch signed by the Viceroy and his colleagues, was forwarded to England setting forth fully the circumstances of the case, and asking the sanction of the Secretary of State to the proposed experiment. "We are anxious," they said, "to give effect to a scheme which we believe to be advocated on purely disinterested grounds, which can, under the experimental conditions proposed, be carefully watched, and which is likely, if successful, to be productive of much benefit to the country."

Nothing now was wanted except the formal sanction of the India Office. But this was just what we could not get. How the project suffered shipwreck almost in sight of land, and how our labour of years came to nought, I will presently relate. But before doing so I ought briefly to describe the friendly reception which was accorded to the scheme by public opinion in England. While the negotiations were still proceeding in India I went home on furlough, and was asked by the bank promoters to make the scheme known in England. Accordingly, on arrival, I communicated the whole circumstances to two of India's best friends, Mr. John Bright and Sir James Caird. They sympathised warmly with the scheme; and Mr. Bright consented to take the chair at a meeting held at Exeter Hall on the 5th of July, 188[illegible], under the auspices of the East India Association, when I read a paper on "The Poona Rayats' Bank." A discussion followed in which Sir James Caird and other high authorities took part. The

Chairman's speech, and the debate generally, were strongly favourable to the scheme, and next day the *Times*, *Daily News*, *Standard*, and other London papers gave their approval to the proposal. Next it was necessary to make the scheme known in Lancashire. And, accordingly, on the invitation of the Directors, I read a paper before the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, under the Presidency of Mr. G. Lord, the Chairman. The paper was entitled "Government Concessions to Agricultural Banks in India." A resolution in cordial support of the scheme was moved by the late Mr. John Slagg, then senior member for Manchester, and seconded by Mr. (now Sir William) Houldsworth, M.P., and was carried unanimously. And in accordance with a further resolution this expression of opinion was forwarded to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India. Further, a corresponding committee was formed, including the Chairman, and Deputy-Chairman of the Chamber, in order to give the scheme continuing support. Finally, with a view to placing the banks' debentures on the English money market, it was thought desirable to approach the authorities of high finance in London. Accordingly, on the introduction of Mr. Bright, I had an interview with Sir Nathaniel (now Lord) Rothschild, M.P., who had already expressed himself interested in the subject. He agreed to give the scheme favourable consideration, and added that if the terms seemed satisfactory from a financial point of view, he did not think there would be difficulty in obtaining the necessary capital.

There only remains to tell the sad conclusion of the tale. How did the case stand? The Indian peasantry were in great destitution, being deeply sunk in debt, and in chronic danger of famine. A practical remedy, tested by long and varied experience, was proposed. In India the authorities were desirous of giving this remedy a trial in a cautious experimental way; all public opinion in India and in England had declared itself in favour of the movement; only the India Office at Westminster stood in the way, and forbade the experiment to be tried. It seems almost incredible, but such is the fact. How the scheme was baffled by delay; how the promoters were wearied out by interminable correspondence on theoretical objections and hypothetical difficulties; and how finally the proposals were met by a point-blank refusal in the House of Commons on the 18th of August, 1887; is it not all written in a Blue Book of seventy-two closely printed pages? In any case the scheme was done to death. To this day I do not know whose hand struck the fatal blow. But the guilt lies with the India Office. The scheme represented the care and labour of many minds for many years; it had in it promise of relief to suffering millions; and it had no open enemies. But as it entered the portals of the India Office it was stabbed in the dark, and I say that the act was a crime against the people of India.

I must reserve for another occasion the story of the fate which befell our proposals to establish conciliation courts in the rural districts, and to modify the method of revenue collections in accordance with the wishes and habits of the rayats.

II.—THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ON ITS TRIAL.

By Professor A. F. Murison, LL.D.

The gloomy anticipations of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal appear, unhappily, to be only in too fair a way towards dire realisation. "When the time comes," Sir Alexander Mackenzie is reported to have said, "unless all the signs mislead us, it will be, I fear, the greatest famine of the century." The time, it may be said, is at hand. The famine is in possession. Already it holds in its grip a far wider extent of territory than even the terrible visitation of 1876-78. The very brightest official optimism acknowledges that the area affected measures more than double the extent of Great Britain, and contains a population almost equally large, while it also expects that a still larger population "is likely to be visited by scarcity." A fortnight ago there were admitted to be on relief works little short of a million and a half of people, about half of them in the North-West Provinces and Oudh (where the figures are confessedly incomplete), 146,000 in the Central Provinces, 168,000 in Bombay, 162,000 in Bengal. Such were the viceregal estimates of Lord George Hamilton's Mansion House speech. But since then every hour has been increasing the area and the numbers affected, and probably even then it would have been little amiss to double Lord George's rosewater figures; for some ten days before he spoke, veterans of lifelong Indian experience did not hesitate to affirm that the distressed area was equal to nearly half Europe, and the distressed population could not fall much short of one hundred millions. There is but too wide scope for the generosity of England in her most generous mood, and the constancy of that mood will be pretty severely tested before the famine is expelled from the land—the famine and the plague.

In dealing with a famine the usual rule holds good: it is the first steps that count for most. This lesson might have been impressed with some force by a consideration of what happened in the Southern India famine twenty years ago, and particularly by the contrast between the action of officials in Madras and the procedure of the government of Haidarabad. There can be no higher judgment on this point than that of Mr. William Digby. "An adequate grasp of the situation in the autumn of 1876, followed by energetic measures," says Mr. Digby, "would have saved to Southern India at least two millions out of the four millions who perished for want of food and from the diseases which privation produced." On the other hand, "one secret of the success whereby the great famine was overcome in the Nizam's dominions was the promptitude with which the trouble was grappled with, and the rapidity with which the remissions of revenue were made." Has the present famine been grappled with as promptly? Have rapid remissions of revenue been made? It is not our plan to remit revenue; and the promptitude will have to be proved. There is room to fear that the mistake of Southern India has been, to some extent at least, repeated.

"It will be the business of the Government," says

the *Times*, "to render it certain that no one need be compelled to starve; it will be the business of the administrators of the famine fund to secure, as far as may be possible, that no one should be permitted to starve." The sentence is nicely balanced, undoubtedly. But how many men, women, and children have been "compelled" and "permitted" to starve already, before the complacent words were written—nay, months ago? What can we in this country be supposed to understand of the dire progress of the famine when our "leading" journal can deliberately publish such fatuously self-satisfied comment? It is very true that in the last twenty years there has been a great extension of railway communication and of irrigation works, and that in both cases a special regard for the possibilities of famine has dominated the constructions. But is it quite certain that the official mind has not placed somewhat too implicit reliance upon these exhibitions of British energy and foresight? Sir Charles Elliott's pronounced confidence used to be freely employed as a practically conclusive argument when enquiries were made about the missing Famine Fund. The official confidence was echoed in the *Times* just a dozen years ago to-morrow, and we were assured, with all the serene authority of a leading—and misleading—article, that the Government had given "fair assurance of subsistence for the chronic recurrence of famine." Only a couple of years back, General Chesney deliberately, and no doubt with absolute conviction, wrote: "The scheme of famine protection has been carried out to the contemplated extent; the liability of the Government to incur a great expenditure on the direct relief of famine, in the supply of food or relief works, no longer exists." In fact, it would seem that the official mind regarded famine as, if not definitively an extinct scourge of the past, at any rate a danger whose outbreaks were within easy and certain control. How far this attitude of mind has in reality existed in high places remains to be seen. All that is now alleged is, that there seems to be very considerable reason for suspecting that it did exist, and that the necessary consequences of course followed.

Considering that there have been thirteen "famines" in India this century, and that every four years there is a scarcity or famine somewhere or other in that country—the Famine Commissioners' Report admits as much—the possibility of famine must, of course, have been in contemplation, however doubtfully or confidently, in the abstract. The Famine Code was there, a document drawn up, we are told, and no doubt truly told, with great skill and care. But was the Famine Code generally available, in the hands of the people concerned, to apply it in practice? And was the action of the people conformed to its precepts? That we do not as yet know with anything like general or accurate knowledge, and we hold judgment in suspense. But there is some not inconsiderable reason, again, for very grave doubt. For example, the Bombay Presidency Association sent out "a gentleman of position and experience" to visit the famine-stricken districts of the Presidency. On December 2 that gentleman reported from Sholapur—a place where the situation has been universally admitted to be very serious—as follows:—

"The first thing that strikes me is, that *no copies of the Famine Code are yet available to the public*. I enquired of the Municipal Secretary, Sholapur, if he had bought one, and he told me that, no price having been fixed by Government, the Central Press, Bombay, could not sell the copies to the purchasers. The consequence is, that the public and the subordinate executive officers have very imperfect knowledge about the contents of the Famine Relief Code. *This ignorance has led to fearful results to a great extent.* . . .

The Statistical Atlas calculates with certainty that in the event of the recurrence of a famine, Government will have to provide for at least a lakh of people. This warning, based on official opinion, was given in 1889, and the agency of the Agricultural Department, specially organized since, have been keeping Government, through the Executive Heads of the District, informed from time to time as to the real condition of the people in their charge.

Government were in possession of official and telegraphic information as far back as October last, that steps should be taken at the earliest possible opportunity to start relief work on a proper scale. Mr. Spence, the Commissioner of the Central Division, visited Sholapur on the 26th October, and must have been satisfied, on personal inspection, what was the real condition of things. The last week of October, therefore, may be taken as the time when Government, in the Revenue and Political Departments, ought to have taken *immediate* steps to send additional subordinates on the spot to give aid to those whose hands were already full with work. But even up to date, no Relief Mamlatdars have been appointed, no additional Relief Circle Inspectors have been entertained, no addition is made to the subordinate staff in the Medical and Engineering Departments, and although the services of some additional police have been retained, their services are not available for relief purposes.

While giving full credit to Government for their desire to relieve the sufferings of the poor people, no action seems to have been taken to place the Famine operations under proper control. . . . At Boromani, people drink dirty, filthy water near by their camp, in which they are daily washing their bodies and clothing, and, unless some serious step is taken to remedy this evil, a fearful epidemic will break out soon and endanger the public health."

Here, we take it, is a series of important allegations, by a trustworthy observer, which evidently need to be answered very pointedly in the negative, before the Government can be acquitted of negligence at the critical moment. Where is the good of the most skilfully and carefully constructed Code if it be not available? And the same commissioner, at a later point in the same report, instances with disapproval clear departures from the instructions of the Code—departures that may very easily result in disaster to many of the sufferers. Writing again on December 10th from Patas, on the G. I. P. Railway, he says:

"Another thing I have learnt is, that the translations of the Famine Code into vernaculars, *i.e.*, Marathi, Canarese, and Guzerathi, have not yet been undertaken by the Oriental Translator's office. This, if true, is certainly deplorable."

Again, from Bijapur Station on the S. M. Railway, on December 12th, the commissioner reports details as to the payment of the relief people in modes discountenanced by the provisions of the Famine Code, and adds this:

"Is there any doubt now left in your mind as to how people are starved? . . . Just make your own calculations as to how much grain these people have received at the reduced or even original rates of wages, and let the Government of the Presidency know the real condition of the people.

"Add to this want of shelter, want of proper sanitary and medical help, and other wants contemplated and provided by the Famine Code; take again into consideration that the Collector of Poona, who is at Baramati now (20 miles off),

reports (under date 5th December) to Government that a few cases of cholera and imported plague have occurred; and you can imagine easily what the future condition of these poor people will soon be."

Now, such accounts as these from the Bombay side at least raise difficulties in the way of a complacent belief that the "special machinery" of the Famine Code has been in prompt readiness and been brought into prompt operation. We do not prejudge the case; we simply note the facts and their obvious bearing.

In a sense, it may be true that "the actual day on which the appeal is made to the people of this country is," as Lord George Hamilton urged for himself, "of little importance." But that depends upon the date. The sooner the appeal is made, the sooner the money goes out. Why the Indian Secretary held the benevolent hands of the Lord Mayor, or why Lord Elgin and his Council delayed the action of the Indian Secretary, is a mystery to all outsiders, Blue-books notwithstanding. It is notorious that for weeks before—we may safely say for months before—local special committees constituted for the very purpose of assisting Government effort were already in active operation widely over the famine area. The talk about "overlapping and interfering" with the activity of the Government, and about the preliminary necessity of establishing "special machinery," is nonsense of the most audacious quality. If it were ignorance, it would be nothing less than criminal. The support of the English public, and fundamentally the sympathy of English opinion, is all the more important on the present occasion, when the Calcutta treasury is so blankly empty. In the last number of India, Mr. Dacosta quoted a Calcutta telegram of December 17th, which we have not seen contradicted or disavowed, that the Indian treasury was then reported not to be in a position to meet the Council's drafts, and that the Bank of Bengal contemplated stopping all advances on Government security. This famine—with the plague, and the inevitable decrease of revenue—means another large loan, another millstone hung on the neck of hapless India.

"It is in times of dire distress and calamity," said the Indian Secretary, "that the true instincts of affinity are shown;" and he talked glibly about "the ties of sympathy, of common interest and kindly feeling which, more than the power of the sword and the prestige of our name, constitute the strength and stability of our rule in India." It would hardly be possible, in the existing circumstances, to frame language of a more ingenuously insolent import. What of the "so-called" Famine Relief Fund? What of the drain of produce from India to England to meet home charges, military expenditure, interest on debt, pensions, and so forth, without adequate return, or without any return at all? What of the methods of administration that crush native aspiration and contemn native knowledge and experience?—that suck the very life-blood of the nation and laboriously prevent the prosperity of the people, thus minimising what might be the biggest market for English traders? What of the ruinous waste of Indian money on wars and rumours of wars that are absolutely irrelevant to Indian interests—except when the bills are sent in for payment? What have we done, when the account is balanced, for the prevention of this unspeakable calamity of famine? What have we shown ourselves capable of doing to cope with the calamity when it has befallen? Why, "there is nothing in the whole range of Indian administration," says Mr. Digby, "in which we have been so completely and so discreditably worsted as in our Famine Campaigns." During this century the number of those that have died of famine in India exceed by several times the number of those that have perished in the wars of the same period in all the civilised States of the world. If it be urged that no human power can stay the approach of famine by making the skies pour down rain at the right season and in the right place—granted. But why is it that our record is so black in comparison with that of the Native States? The answer is outlined in vigorous strokes by Mr. Digby in his little work on "India for the Indians—and for England," and it is remarkably well worth pondering at the present time. Undoubtedly, the English public will cordially sympathise with their stricken fellow-subjects in India, and liberally aid them in their extremity. The cruel position is that, while they can in a vague way comprehend a famine, and respond with alacrity to a special call in the name of humanity, they do not comprehend, and have no effective means of continuously following, the ordinary administration on which depends the safety and the health of India, and withal the supremacy and imperial greatness of England.

III.—THE LAND TAX IN INDIA.

By J. Dacosta.

The distinguished historian and moralist, Pineau Duclos, said:—*La nature donne les vivres; les hommes font la famine* (Nature provides food; famine is wrought by men)—a saying which seems specially apt to India, where the soil and climate supply ample food for her millions of inhabitants, and produce even a surplus which is exported to other countries; yet gaunt famine periodically stalks that land of plenty, inflicting the pangs of hunger and the horrors of a slow death by starvation on thousands, nay millions, of her children.

British rule was introduced into Bengal in 1757, and at earlier periods in Madras and Bombay, and efforts have ever since been made professedly to avert the visitation of famine from the people whom we undertook to govern and protect. Nevertheless, hunger and starvation are, at this very moment, desolating wide tracts in our Indian Empire, and the Viceroy, who is spending large sums of public money in attempts to relieve the afflicted populations, has succeeded in impressing on the Secretary of State that charitable contributions towards the more effectual fulfilment of that duty should no longer be discouraged at home.

The obvious preventive remedy for famine, among a people whose staple industry is agriculture, is to lay by the profits earned in favourable seasons, for tiding over seasons of scarcity caused by drought or inundation. In India these calamities occur

fortunately at pretty long intervals, so that full scope is allowed for the exercise of the needed thrift and frugality—qualities which our Indian fellow-subjects possess in an eminent degree, and which doubtless enabled their ancestors to accumulate that great wealth for which India was for many centuries proverbially renowned. But under the land system adopted by us in India the agricultural classes seldom have any savings to lay by, seeing that the tax we impose on land generally absorbs its annual value and frequently exceeds it, resulting in balances being held over for recovery in subsequent years. Cultivators are thus left in a chronic state of pauperism and indebtedness.

When Lord Cornwallis went to India as Governor General, he soon perceived the baneful effects of our system of arbitrarily re-assessing the land tax every ten years, in order to enhance its amount whenever an improvement in the condition of the land or the circumstances of the taxpayer warranted the expectation that a larger revenue might be secured. All agricultural improvements made by owners and farmers thus became liable to be absorbed in the fiscal demand of the Government at each re-assessment, a method calculated most effectually to discourage the employment of capital in the improvement of the soil. Lord Cornwallis accordingly wrote to the authorities at home in September 1783:—

"I may safely assert that a third of the Company's territory in Hindustan is now a jungle inhabited by wild beasts. Will a ten year's lease induce any proprietor to clear away that jungle and encourage rayats to come and cultivate his lands, when, at the end of that lease, he must either submit to be taxed *ad libitum* for the newly-cultivated lands, or lose all hopes of deriving any benefit from his labours for which, by that time, he may hardly be repaid?"

Lord Cornwallis suggested therefore as a measure calculated to "direct the industry of the people to those improvements in agriculture, which were as essential to their own welfare as they were to the prosperity of the State," that the land tax should be fixed in perpetuity. The measure was fully discussed in Parliament by the illustrious William Pitt and other eminent statesmen of the day, and was adopted with the concurrence of the Crown in January, 1793, on the terms so clearly and so admirably enunciated in the series of Indian Regulations enacted for the purpose.

The rapidity with which the expectations founded on that great measure were realised is a matter of history; and the following extract from a public record of 1883 testifies to the benefits which continued to flow from the Permanent Settlement, until that source of agricultural prosperity and popular contentment was checked by the Bengal Tenancy Act, passed in 1885, which authorised the Executive to disregard the pledges of 1793, and to appropriate the wealth which a fair observance of those pledges had enabled the landowners and cultivators of Bengal to accumulate:—

"The Bengal of to-day offers a startling contrast to the Bengal of 1793. The wealth and prosperity of the country have marvellously increased—increased beyond all precedent under the Permanent Settlement." *Report of the Commissioner of Burdwan, Official Gazette of India, October, 20th* 1883.

In 1837 the North-West Provinces of India were overtaken by a great famine; they had been annexed after Lord Cornwallis's departure from India, and the beneficent provisions of the Permanent Settlement Regulations of Bengal were not extended to them. The sufferings of the people from the effects of the famine, as described by eye-witnesses, were truly heart-rending, villagers being attacked by wolves and jackals and devoured when they were exhausted by hunger and unable to escape or to resist.

In 1860 the same provinces were once more desolated by famine; and a Commission having been appointed to enquire into the causes of the calamity, Colonel Baird Smith R.E., its President, after comparing in his report the circumstances of the famine of 1860, with those of the famine of 1837, submitted the following observations:—

"Foremost among the means whereby society in Northern India has been so strengthened as to resist with less suffering far heavier pressure from drought and famine in 1860 than in 1837, I place the creation, as it may almost literally be called, of a vast mass of readily convertible and easily transferable agricultural property. I have before described the condition of agricultural property antecedent to the land settlements; and it will probably be admitted, without serious qualification, that a state of things more likely to weaken the society living under it, could scarcely be conceived. To great and unequal pressure of public burdens and arbitrary interference have succeeded assessments rarely heavy, titles recorded and easily understood, long leases and the enjoyment of all the profits during the currency of such leases. The natural results of a change in so vital a part of the social economy, have grown more and more apparent. Land has obtained an increasing marketable value. Its value as a security has doubtless been largely made use of in mitigating the pressure of famine. Such having been the results of the protracted fixity of the public demand, the security of titles, the general moderation of assessments, the recognition and general record of rights, the inference seems irresistible that, to intensify and perpetuate these results, we must proceed still further in the same healthy and fruitful direction. The good which has been done by partial action on sound principles, is both a justification and an encouragement to further advances; and entertaining the most earnest conviction that State interests and popular interests will alike be strengthened in an increasing ratio by the step, the first and, as I believe, the most important measure I have respectfully to submit, is the expediency of fixing for ever the public demand on land, and thus converting the existing settlement into a settlement in perpetuity."

Colonel Baird Smith's suggestion was concurred in and strongly supported by the highest officials in the North-West Provinces, and the Viceroy expressed, in a minute addressed to the Secretary of State, the same conviction as to the great benefits which would ensue from the permanent limitation of the revenue demand upon land. A Government resolution was, at the same time, published in India, saying:—

"His Excellency in Council sees no reason to doubt that the measure would be in every way beneficent. He believes that the increased security of fixed property and the comparative freedom from interference of fiscal officers of the Government will tend to create a class which, although composed of various races and creeds, will be peculiarly bound to British rule, while, under proper regulations, the measure will conduce materially to the improvement of the general revenue of the Empire."

After prolonged deliberation, the Secretary of State authorised permanent settlements to be granted to all estates in the North-West Provinces where a full and fair rent (rent being the basis of assessment) had been imposed under existing settle-

ments. The despatch was concluded in the following terms :—

"After the most careful review of all these considerations, her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the advantages which may reasonably be expected to accrue, not only to those immediately connected with the land but to the community generally, are sufficiently great to justify them in incurring the risk of some prospective loss of land revenue in order to attain them ; and that a settlement in perpetuity in the districts in which the conditions required are or may hereafter be fulfilled, is a measure dictated by sound policy and calculated to accelerate the development of the resources of India, and to insure in the highest degree the welfare and contentment of all classes of her Majesty's subjects in the country."

Lord Canning died in 1862 and a change of Ministry subsequently took place at home. The new Cabinet contemplated a second invasion of Afghanistan ; and as the project involved a severe strain on the finances of India, Indian officials were consulted as to probable results of the permanent settlements recently authorised. Some among them reported that, as the annual value or rental of land increased with the lapse of time and the progress of civilization, if the assessments, which represented half the rental, could no longer be periodically enhanced in the same proportion, the difference must be regarded as a sacrifice of revenue from land. Those officers who thus declared that permanent settlements involved a prospective loss of land revenue must have overlooked the circumstance that enterprise and the application of capital are the main and the most potent factors in developing the annual value of land, and that both those factors are paralysed by the uncertainty and the risk inseparable from arbitrary assessment. They likewise ignored the fact that fixity in the Government demand on land has invariably led to agricultural prosperity, whence arises, in a country like India, national wealth—the surest and most prolific source of State income.

The Government, influenced by these irresponsible advisers, deemed it unsafe to part with the power of imposing arbitrary assessments in view of emergencies which might arise in the prosecution of their contemplated aggressive policy, and render the possession of such power particularly desirable. Orders were then sent to India to suspend the permanent settlements authorised by the previous Secretary of State ; and thus was lost a great and beneficent measure which statesmen of the highest character had suggested as the true remedy for famine. Millions of our fellow subjects are consequently now afflicted by hunger, despair and starvation, through the acts of those who were instrumental in preventing that beneficial measure from affording them the relief and protection which it was calculated to confer.

IV.—"THE GREATEST CALAMITY OF THE PRESENT CENTURY."

By Donald N. Reid.

I write this article under the heading of words which were used by Sir John Woodburn at a meeting of the Legislative Council. As the *Times* truly remarked "those are words of terrible significance in the mouth of an Indian administrator." The *Times*, however, is never "agin' the Government" for more than a few moments, as in the very next sentence it relapsed into an optimistic mood, and said :

"From that awful prospect we are now freed, and owing to the considerable areas sown in the affected districts during the November rains, and fertilised by the rains of last week, a substantial addition to the resources of the people may be expected in April."

There is a Hindustani proverb to the effect that the children of the Brahman and of the Dusadh are, for the moment, all fair-skinned as they came out of their mother's womb. This proverb is intended to show that all young seedlings look well for a day or two ; but, as the crops reach maturity, there is a great difference in the appearance of the fields. It must be remembered that the *rabi* crops were not sown under favourable conditions, owing to want of moisture and delay in irrigating ; and although the young plants may look well enough at present, disappointment must surely await the cultivators at harvest time. But under any circumstances, too much reliance should not be placed upon the *rabi* of Behar and Northern India, as only a very limited amount of land is sufficiently well manured to give a good out-turn. Double-cropping is practiced in all the congested districts, and *rabi* cannot succeed well after maize or millet.

The rainfall in Northern India, or in Behar, during November, December, and January must not be regarded as an unmixed blessing. In fact, it ought to be regarded as a warning of breakers ahead, as heavy rainfall in winter is generally followed by drought in autumn. I am quite aware of the fact that the Meteorological Department of India pooh-pooh this idea, but an ounce of practical experience is worth a ton of theory, and a man who has had to bear the losses of three disastrous seasons of drought in a decade of years, may be excused for being a little dogmatic in his opinion about the weather. I therefore beg of the Government to look for breakers again during the coming autumn. I must explain my reason for uttering this ominous warning by referring the reader to the following statement of the rainfall at my late factory of Sadowa, for ten years, from 1868 to 1877, inclusive :—

	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877
	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.
January	1·20	...	...	...	0·20	...	...	0·50	0·21	3·10
February ...	0·50	...	...	...	...	...	0·30	...	...	0·60
March	...	0·40	0·40	...	0·30	0·35	...	0·20	0·05	0·65
April	0·20	...	...	0·60	0·40	0·20	1·0	0·30	0·80	0·50
May	2·60	0·85	0·40	3·10	2·40	0·40	1·0	1·60	1·50	0·60
June	3·10	3·80	4·40	4·80	12·20	2·80	13·10	13·70	3·20	1·50
July	5·60	4·60	14·70	9·60	16.90	10·40	7·30	7·80	5·80	14·20
August	8·70	5·70	12·40	24·0	8·10	6·30	3·90	7·90	11·75	2·55
September ...	3·20	6·10	16·50	30·60	15·50	2·70	12·60	4·0	10·30	...
October	...	3 60	16 90	3·20	...	..	3·20	...	9·20	0·80
November ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
December ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total Inches.	25·10	25·05	65·70	75·90	56·0	23·15	42·40	36·0	42·81	24·50

Average, 41·66

A glance at the above table will show that the

winter rainfall in 1868 and in 1877 was heavy, but in September and October the rainfall was very deficient, consequently there was an entire failure of the *aghani* rice crops. The above table is taken from my report to the Famine Commission; and in the report I went on to say that—

"I consider the undermentioned rainfall sufficient for agricultural necessities:—

January	1·50
February	0
March	0
April	1·
May	2·50
June	5·
July	14·
August	12·
September	14·
October	4·
November	0
December	1·
Total for the Year	55inches.

"The foregoing may appear too liberal an allowance; but I can point out extensive tracts of paddy land in the Saran District which have not borne rice for the last five years, from 1873 to 1877 inclusive, although during two seasons of that period the rainfall was forty inches from June to October."

Another most important point to remember is that the *rabi* crops only occupy the ground for four-and-a-half months in the year, from November till the middle of March, and to obtain good results, the sowings must be completed at the proper season. On this account alone canal irrigation is of the greatest value in years when moisture is deficient in the soil. Now, I have already pointed out in the beginning of this article, that the *rabi* sowings of this year were carried on until the end of November or the beginning of December. Late sown crops are never a success in India, and although I cannot quote figures to prove this statement with regard to the *rabi*, the following results obtained by me from early and from late crops of indigo, will be interesting and sufficiently convincing:—

Year.	Gross Proceeds, in rupees, from early-sown crops of indigo.	Year.	Gross Proceeds, in rupees, from late-sown crops of indigo.
1868	Rs. 2,84,480	1869	Rs. 77,740
1873	,, 2,65,712	1874	,, 88,664
1877	,, 3,41,669	1878	,, 1,16,345
Total.	Rs. 8,91,861	Total.	Rs. 2,82,749

The late-sown crops of the above-mentioned three seasons did not even pay their working expenses; in fact, they saddled me with very heavy loss, which, when compared with the results obtained from the early-sown crops, represented the enormous sum of Rs. 6,09,112. This heavy loss compelled me to agitate for canals in connexion with my factories, so that in the future the sowing of indigo seed should be completed at the proper season by means of irrigation, instead of being dependent upon moisture from the precarious rainfall in autumn. But the rayats, poor creatures, are fatalists; and as yet they do not quite appreciate the advantage of artificial irrigation in Behar. It would therefore be as well if they were taught the value of the following lines from one of Rudyard Kipling's ballads:

"Don't get into doin' things rather more or less.
Let's ha' done with *abby-nay*, *Kul*, and *hazar-ho*."

A well-known author and ex-cabinet minister, in an article on Macaulay, has told us that Mr. Carlyle, the most eminent man of letters in England in our generation, has taught us the gospel of silence in thirty octavo volumes. The Government of India believe most thoroughly in Carlyle's doctrine that silence is golden, hence the reason why so little is known in England about India. Innumerable Blue-books are certainly printed by the India Office, but a man who is not compelled by a strong sense of duty to read one of these formidable-looking publications will pass it by on the other side. The Blue-book that will induce the man in the street to act the part of the good Samaritan has yet to be published. Moreover, the weekly article on Indian affairs in the *Times*, and an occasional lecture by an old Anglo-Indian before the Society of Arts or the East India Association are:

"Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste."

The English public are therefore wofully ignorant regarding matters connected with the great country which has to support one-fifth of the human race. Well, the result of all this ignorance is that the Government have been allowed to fritter away their time at their old game of "beggar your neighbour." Famine warnings, which for years have foretold the present calamity, were neglected; and the result is that matters have been allowed to get out of hand. Four years ago, in 1893, I offered to raise money in London for the construction of the Sarda Canal in Oudh; an undertaking which would have saved the densely populated provinces of Oudh and Behar from the worst form of famine in the present year. But Sir Edward Buck wrote to me to the effect that the wells and *jhils* of Oudh supplied sufficient water in the driest years. The present condition of Oudh will, however, prove how mistaken the idea was that wells and *jhils* could irrigate the land sufficiently in a famine year. Canals have been shoved aside to make room for the railway boom, and Sir Lepel Griffin is still thundering for railways in the weekly and daily papers, and on the platform of the East India Association; while he disparages canals and all their works. But Anglo-Indians who are directors of banks and railway companies think that there is nothing like leather. Moreover, Sir Lepel Griffin is behind the times, as he is evidently unaware of the fact that gypsum is an antidote to black alkali (*reh*), the occurrence of which salt to excess in soils is directly due to deficient rainfall and not to canal irrigation. This carbonate of soda is not to be found to excess in any of the districts of Behar and Lower Bengal, which have a good rainfall, and yet the lands of these districts are water-logged in ordinary seasons to an extent which would ruin the entire crops of Upper India. With apologies to Mr. Rudyard Kipling, I have ventured to alter the sense of his lines on the 'Eathen, by advising the rayat to

"Mind you keep your *rabi*[1]
An' your *Khet*[2] jus' so,"

as the proper antidote to malaria (malaria is another of Sir Lepel's bugbears) in every district of India is

[1] Winter crops. [2] Fields.

the scientific cultivation of wheat and of leguminous crops. These crops cannot flourish without thorough drainage, and therefore the bottom is knocked out of Sir Lepel Griffin's arguments against canals.

To give an idea of the unscientific methods which are pursued by the Government in an attempt to cope with the famine, I may mention that inferior food-stuffs, such as millet and rice, will be sent by the grain dealers thousands of miles on a railway journey to feed the starving people; while earth-nuts (*Arachis hypogæa*), which contain fully as much flesh-forming constituents in proportion to their weight as an egg, are exported out of India. This may be in accordance with the doctrines inculcated by John Stuart Mill, but there is a well-known proverb to the effect that one man's meat is another man's poison; and the principles of political economy which are suitable for the trading and manufacturing classes of England are ruinous to the masses of India, as these poor creatures live from hand to mouth in the best of seasons. I therefore strongly advocated the storage of grain in the congested districts, and in those districts where the rainfall is precarious; but the Famine Commission were steeped to the eyes in the doctrines of John Stuart Mill and other English political economists, and they pinned their faith on Free Trade and their network of railways.

Now, the principal food-grains of India are millets, and it will be found that of most of these millets the weight of a dozen seeds will scarcely equal the weight of one seed of sound wheat; moreover, the dozen millet seeds are enveloped in five or six times the weight of husk found on a single grain of wheat. Taking these facts into consideration, would it not be better to store these millets in good years, so that they may be used for local consumption in seasons of scarcity? Millets, such as chêna (*Panicum miliaceum*) and maruya (*Eleusine coracana*) are well suited for storing, as they are never attacked by weevils, and keep sound for years. Another thing to be said in favour of storing the inferior food grains is, that it would encourage the rayats to develop the cultivation of wheat, barley, and leguminous crops. By this means improved cultivation and superior crops would take the place of the present haphazard systems of farming.

V.—OFFICIAL OPTIMISM AND IMPERIAL HUMANITY.

[BY AN INDEPENDENT POLITICIAN.]

Some facts are so educating, so mist-dispersing, that no better description can be given than in Carlyle's phrase. They are "God's facts." The Indian famine has been one of these tremendous events. It found us engaged in the usual felicitations over the improvement of Indian revenue. It surprised the officials in their repentant efforts to make the Famine Fund a reality. As an independent politician I was expectant. It seemed as if the Indian Government was actually waking up, under the healthy stimulus of British opinion on the military question. Instead of a brilliant revival, a common sense evolution, we had the spectacle presented to us of an administrative body engaged in a service of mutual admiration. Perhaps this was natural. There is no body of men, as I have convinced myself by long observation, so lifted up by a sense of their own importance and superiority as are the Indian officials. They are constantly challenging our admiration, and chanting pæans to their own virtues. So when Parliament broke up we were left to two reflections. Indian finance was winding itself out pleasantly into beautiful straight lines, and, after many vicissitudes, the Famine Fund was again becoming what its original authors declared it should be, a "sacred trust."

With the first hints of drought some of us were moved to think we had been doing an injustice to the Indian Government, because it seemed so thoroughly alive to its duties. The whole situation was reviewed in an apparently common sense fashion. Preparations were made in a spirit of confidence. British opinion caught the glow of earnest effort, and it was pleased with the self-satisfaction of men grappling with a calamity, and conscious of their own resources. Here we have, at last, some of us said, an administrative energy that is splendid and hopeful. There is no cause for alarm. Some weeks of autumn were spent in a cheerful, and even radiant, mood. Official telegrams ministered to our satisfaction. System, resources, prevision, were apparent. We were all ready to catch the optimism of the officials. In fact, we were optimistic ourselves. The Famine was going to be subdued by a sharp, short, and brilliantly conducted campaign. Some of the Indian papers appeared to give substance to our hopes. Independent politicians were, for once, disposed to think that the Indian Government was master of the situation.

How the reverse, the awakening, came it is not quite easy to say. The numbers seeking relief began to grow. Private letters suggested doubts. A date was fixed when the maximum of distress would be reached. But still the optimism of the official mind was maintained. It hardly seemed to be justified. Common people began to have doubts. The India Office discouraged these qualms. Everything was said to be going on splendidly. The Government of India meant to do its duty magnificently. It had a well-devised Famine Code to work upon, ample means, and the support of public opinion in India and in England. For two whole months we were confronted by official optimism in its most extraordinary development. The more our doubts increased, the more self-assertive this optimism became. One looks back on November and December with feelings of utter astonishment. What an amazing edifice of impotence and impudence was raised for Englishmen to enter, in order that they might worship Indian official ability, genius and self-confidence! It has gone now, but it was an imposing structure, with fine choral services, while it lasted; and it deceived some millions of human beings.

Before the crash came there were some voices in very strident dissonance. They have since been described by Lord George Hamilton as so much

hysteria—a morbid series of manifestations not to be regarded. But in a great crisis it does not do to trust to a mere haberdasher of phrases. Hysteria was but a phrase for outraged and disappointed humanity, for righteous anger, for utterly wrecked and routed optimism. Official knowledge was so exact and comprehensive, it was said, that no one outside the Indian administration could know the real facts. Weekly telegrams and statistics were given to soothe and satisfy opinion, by this time getting very irritable and anxious. Lancashire was ready to act, but what could Lancashire know that was unknown to Lord George Hamilton? The question was one more revelation of the existence of official virtue and superiority; the Expert seeking to crush the Philanthropist. When the Indian Government was convinced that public co-operation was desirable and necessary, it would speak. Until then, our hands were to be in our pockets, our eyes were to be fixed in admiration on capable organisers doing brave work amidst unjust criticism by badly-informed persons.

When this enlightenment began, there was an important Congress sitting in Calcutta. Practical men, patriots, and earnest civilians and business men, had met to talk over the affairs of India, in a sensible and quiet way, without any of the rhetoric and phrase-making since expended in running down true humanity. Englishmen at home saw that a crisis had come. The Lord Mayor of London was appealed to in vain. He would not move, he could not move, without the sanction of Lord George Hamilton. Was there ever a more humiliating example of mesmeric optimism? It was the Indian National Congress that touched Lancashire, frightened the India Office, stirred up the citizens of Calcutta, sent a thrill of doubt through Lord Elgin, and transformed the entire situation. It is immaterial that immediate acknowledgment was not made of the fact. It was significant, however, that it was in Calcutta, the meeting-place of the Congress, the movement began which forced the Indian Government to act, and which led to a brisk exchange of telegrams between the Secretary for India and the Viceroy. In the whole course of its existence, so we independent politicians reason and declare, the National Congress has never achieved such a triumph, never made itself the mouthpiece of such national and Imperial sentiment, never so completely and triumphantly justified its existence. In ten days or so after the Lord Mayor of London had been lost in admiration of official self-sufficiency, and Great Britain had been assured that the time was not ripe, that the Indian Government was arrayed in all its glory for self-sufficient labour, an appeal was being made for voluntary assistance!

In the whole history of India there has been nothing, in my judgment, more cynical than this assumption, that it was the Indian Government which discovered the exact time when public benevolence should be invoked, and that the first steps in the change of policy were due to its own initiative. As a matter of fact, it had been resisting the public appeal for voluntary action; it had been concealing from itself the gravity of the famine; it had been allowing famine to affect the craftsmen and the weavers, its indirect victims; and it had been struggling vainly with distress in many regions before it had the manliness and honesty to assent to humane co-operation and to allow the generous hearts of the people to have some share in a noble work.

Observe, further, what has happened, looking at the matter from a purely independent position. In defying public opinion, the Indian Government has plumed itself upon superior knowledge. Is that superiority justified by the facts? I hold that it is not. The famine has become more serious, more extensive, and more intensive than the officials had considered possible three months ago. Yet they were supposed to have at command better information than anybody else, than the Indian Congress, than the Anglo-Indian residents, and the missionary societies and journals of India. Confession of failure has been made, and the consequences of that confession must hereafter make us always suspicious of official optimism. The "we know" of the official must henceforth be challenged by the "we doubt" of the independent-minded.

The hysteria of December, it cannot be too strongly insisted upon, has become humanity in January! An appeal has been made to humanity, to that scorned and generous emotion which was as ready in December as it was later. The critics who saw that the time had come for external aid were not intent upon embarrassing the Indian Government. They were not sceptical respecting its desire to do the best that could be done with the means at its command. They were not extravagant enthusiasts who wished to corrupt and demoralise a people for whom no large amount of assistance, either in food, or loans, or raw material, or orders was necessary. They merely saw the widening effects of famine, the insufficiency of mere rations, the impossibility of complete relief by public works. They were more humane in their ideas than bodies of men who only aimed at poor relief, at keeping people alive, and who could not spare time to hunt out people who were quietly wasting away in their homes, too proud to abase themselves as paupers, and feeling the famine like a terror that would not be stayed. They had wider views. They were intent on diminishing human suffering, and preventing that wasteful, awful demoralisation and poverty which comes at the rear of famine. To call such a work hysteria was a folly, a calumny. It was one of the noblest attitudes of which the human mind is capable.

Awakened England has had a terrible lesson in the folly of official optimism. It has had a beautiful example of that which has been described as hysteria. It has had a splendid satire on the weak self-sufficiency of an Indian Secretary. The effect upon the future government of India must be immense. Henceforth the Indian Empire has to be ruled with respect to the views, wishes and feelings of two peoples, the Indian and the English. What may have hitherto sufficed for India—official optimism, central satisfaction and incomplete information—will not suffice for England. The National Congress must be recognised as a force, as a conscience, as an authoritative interpretation of the thoughts of dumb millions.

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INDIA.

LONDON, FEBRUARY, 1897.

PARLIAMENT AND THE FAMINE.

IT was not, of course, to be expected that Sir William Wedderburn would succeed in carrying his amendment to the Address—an amendment praying that full and independent enquiry might forthwith be made into the condition of the masses of the Indian people, with the view of ascertaining the causes which render them helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence. Lord Salisbury's Government, however weak it may be in other respects, is as yet strong in the division lobby, and no Government will voluntarily accept an amendment, small or great, to the Address, for the simple reason that no Government voluntarily submits to defeat and extinction. But the amendment of January 26th served its turn for all that. It secured early in the Session a profitable debate upon one of the most important topics of the day, and it thereby provided an opportunity for more than one useful and timely suggestion. The interest of the House of Commons in the subject was demonstrated by an attendance exceptionally large for an Indian discussion, and by the not unsatisfactory figures of the division (90—217). Sir James Fergusson, who followed the admirable speech of Mr. H. J. Wilson, testified to the studied moderation with which Sir W. Wedderburn urged his proposal. Lord George Hamilton, in somewhat less complimentary terms, added that a foolish, and worse than foolish, amendment had been moved with much good sense and practical wisdom. How far the Secretary of State for India is able to express a valuable opinion upon these qualities, is a question which need not be discussed. They were not, at any rate, conspicuously manifest in his own speech, which had been carefully rehearsed beforehand, and proved to be completely and ludicrously wide of the issue. Sir W. Wedderburn declared at the beginning of his remarks that India would feel grateful for the expressions of sympathy contained in the Queen's Speech, and for the assurances that the State would, in the appalling calamities which now menace India, do all in its power to save life. But he added that the methods of relief which the Government of India has adopted seek to mitigate the symptoms, and not to remove the cause, of the evil. That cause—the fundamental, as distinguished from the proximate, cause of the horrors of famine—is the extreme poverty of the masses of the people. Expenditure upon famine relief is an excellent palliative, which cannot be applied too soon, nor administered too wisely. But such expenditure does not mitigate the poverty of those who are taxed to provide for it. Indians die of starvation, not because they are perverse, but because they lack food, and have no money or credit to obtain it. India is poor. Yet with her fertile soil, her unfailing sun, and her abundance of cheap and skilful labour, she might be rich beyond the dreams of avarice. If the transformation can be, why is it not, attained? Or, to put the same question in a rather different way, in what directions must we look for the desired change? Sir W. Wedderburn did not, we take it, profess to give a complete answer to this question. But, after forty years' close study of the condition of the Indian rayat, he assured the House of Commons that much might be achieved by the application of certain simple remedies in the village administration.

The first step towards these remedies is full and independent enquiry on the spot, and the sort of enquiry which Sir W. Wedderburn proposed was thoroughly practical and unpretentious. His proposal was so unfairly treated, or rather ignored, by Lord G. Hamilton and others that we may well quote the precise terms in which it was made:

"The enquiry he wanted was a village enquiry, because in the rural villages were included eighty per cent. of the population, and because the village community was the microcosm of all India; and if they could discover the means to make one village prosperous they held the clue to make all India prosperous. For such an enquiry no Imperial Commission

was necessary. The local administration might be directed to select typical villages in each province and to appoint a committee to make a thorough diagnosis of their condition. The committee must be representative, consisting of Europeans and Indians, officials and non-officials; such as were appointed to the Deccan Riots Commission twenty years ago. Their investigation should be of a microscopic kind, to detect the microbes which blighted the rayat's prosperity. He believed that those microbes would be found to be the usurious money-lender (who should be replaced by agricultural banks), the Civil Court (which should be replaced by popular conciliation and arbitration courts), and the harsh and rigid collection of the revenue (which should be replaced by methods suited to the habits and wishes of the rayat)."

It is difficult to read some of the speeches which followed this essentially modest and tentative proposal without concluding that their authors had prepared themselves to attack a totally different proposal, and proved unequal to the effort of recasting their criticisms on the spur of the moment. There was, indeed, and there has since been, no serious attempt to discount the intrinsic value either of the enquiry or of the remedies suggested by Sir W. Wedderburn. Some objection has, indeed, been taken to those words in the amendment which requested that the enquiry should be "full" and that it should be undertaken "forthwith." Lord George Hamilton, for example, permitted himself to say that enquiry was invited not only into every single act of the whole Administration of India, but also into every custom, tradition or habit of three hundred millions of people. But that was mere horseplay. Enquiry is scientifically adequate if it deals fully with rightly selected samples, and Sir W. Wedderburn had made it perfectly clear that this, and not the absurdity conceived by the Secretary of State, was what he desired. The proposal that the enquiry should be started forthwith provoked what was superficially—but only superficially—a more rational objection. It was said that the supporters of the amendment desired to remove "from the "region of action to the region of speculation" some of the forces of the Indian Government "which are "now warring against the advances of famine and "plague." But to say this is to overlook the epithet "independent." Sir W. Wedderburn did not propose, and does not desire, a departmental Committee. If his plan had been accepted, one or two officials would doubtless have been included among the conductors of the investigation, but it would, we imagine, have derived its chief strength from retired and pensioned officers of special local experience and independent experts like Sir James Caird. It may fairly be said, therefore, that such scant criticism as Sir W. Wedderburn's proposal received proves on examination to be groundless. But his proposal was not accepted, and the remedies to which he sought to direct attention must accordingly be brought to public notice in some other way. It will be seen, from the article which we print on another page, that Sir W. Wedderburn, who writes on this subject with special knowledge and experience, has already started upon the task.

How comes it that the Secretary of State for India, and his friends and allies, receive friendly proposals in a tone of insolence? What is their object? Instead of discussing Sir W. Wedderburn's suggestions Lord George Hamilton plunged at once into a vehement attack upon the Indian National Congress, and the British Committee. This sort of abuse has become so stale, and has been exploded so often, that we need not waste further time upon it. But it might be well if Lord George Hamilton, and those who think with him, would decide upon the precise charge which they mean to bring against the British Committee. At present the British Committee is accused at one and the same time of manufacturing public opinion in India by the methods of the wire-puller, and of accepting its facts and figures from India without analysis. This combination of functions is not quite easy to understand. The question is (if we may be pardoned the phrase) whether the Congress wags the British Committee, or the British Committee wags the Congress? Misrepresentation, if it is to be successful, should at least be coherent. Sir W. Wedderburn turned Lord G. Hamilton's irrelevant tirade to a useful purpose by asking him to read out the resolution of the Congress upon the Famine. Lord G. Hamilton had the fairness to accept the invitation, and the result was distinctly interesting. For the resolution, which thus obtained an excellent advertisement, was seen to be so reasonable and practical that, while the Liberal members cheered it, the Tories made no sign of dissent. From the Congress the Secretary of State passed to the Famine Insurance Fund, where his rather halting efforts were afterwards supplemented by Sir Henry Fowler. Here again the theme is old and familiar. We have set forth the facts so often, and so recently, that we need not at this moment repeat them. But Sir Henry Fowler displays a curious forgetfulness when he says that the Government of India undertook to apply annually to the Famine Insurance Fund, not one and a half millions sterling, but one and a half millions Rx. Nor can Lord George Hamilton be congratulated upon his theory that pledges given by the Government of India are binding only upon the individual officers who announce them; or upon his suggestion that it is ungrateful to complain if taxes raised to ward off the horrors of starvation are squandered in the quicksands of Afghanistan. The Secretary of State towards the close of his speech deviated into the relevant when he admitted that the present famine ought not to be allowed to pass without enquiry into

the best methods of protecting the people of India from the recurrence of similar calamities. That, of course, was precisely Sir W. Wedderburn's point. But, unlike Sir W. Wedderburn, Lord George Hamilton believes that no report is worth consideration unless it comes from an official and is produced in the ordinary course of official routine. The converse of this extraordinary delusion is the belief that the Congress represents an organised attack upon the Government of India—as if a man becomes your enemy when he warns you against a danger, while those are your best friends who cheerfully sit still until the danger overtakes you. Sir Henry Fowler, as usual, put a severe strain upon the party loyalty of Liberal members in abandoning himself with such evident relish to the dogmas, the whole dogmas, and nothing but the dogmas of the India Office. The course which he has apparently marked out for himself is not a very hopeful one for a politician who seeks to remain on the Front Bench. But his assent to the suggestion that an Imperial contribution should at this crisis be made to the Indian Exchequer in aid of the taxation of India is, so far as it goes, an act of grace. What is wanted, however, is not a contribution by way of charity, but a refund and a readjustment by way of justice. If Lord Welby's Commission does not make a strong recommendation in this sense, it will have failed in its task.

THE TWELFTH CONGRESS.

The twelfth Session of the Indian National Congress, which was held at Calcutta on December 28, 29, 30, and 31, was a brilliant and conspicuous success. We trust that the enthusiasm which throughout marked its procedings will find a fitting sequel in the practical results attained by its deliberations and recommendations. But, indeed, this future tense is somewhat out of place. The twelfth Congress has already produced practical results of no mean value. The effect of such a gathering upon the five thousand persons who took part in it and, through them, upon many millions of the Indian people, cannot easily be estimated, but it cannot fairly be ignored. A more tangible result is seen in the effect of the Congress resolutions on the subject of the appalling calamity which has attracted universal attention to our Indian Empire. If the President of the Congress, Mr. R. M. Sayani, a Muhammadan member of the Viceregal Council, bore testimony to the good offices of the Congress in bringing together upon a common platform representatives of all the various races and creeds of the Indian people, the chairman of the Reception Committeee, Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter, showed how useful the Congress may prove to the Government of India as an index, or a mirror, of popular opinion and demands. The Congress has signally discharged that function in the case of the Indian famine. At a time when Lord George Hamilton was quibbling over the opening of the Mansion House Relief Fund, and the Lord Mayor of London, for reasons best known to himself, was waiting upon the procrastination of the India Office, the Congress set forth in a comprehensive resolution, which was unanimously adopted, the Indian view of the causes and the only possible remedies of famine, and in a further resolution authorized Mr. Sayani to cable to the India Office and to the Lord Mayor a request that public subscriptions might be invited immediately. These resolution were telegraphed by Reuter as follows:—

"In the fourth resolution the Congress deplores the outbreak of an acute famine throughout India, declaring that this and other famines are due to the great poverty of the people resulting from the drain of wealth which has continued for many years owing to excessive taxation and over assessment consequent upon a policy of extravagance in the civil and military departments, so impoverishing the people that at the first touch of scarcity the helpless must perish unless fed by the State.

"The Congress declares that the true remedy is the adoption of a policy enforcing economy, the husbanding of the resources of the State, and the fostering of Indian arts and industries now virtually extinguished. The Congress reminds the Government of its solemn duty to save life and mitigate suffering, and appeals to it to redeem its pledges by restoring the Famine Insurance Fund to its original purpose of the relief of the famine-stricken.

"In view of the fact that private charity in England is ready to flow freely at this awful juncture, and also that large classes of the sufferers can only be reached by private charity, the Congress protests emphatically against the manner in which the Indian Government blocks the way, and earnestly hopes that the disastrous mistake committed by Lord Lytton's Government will not now be repeated.

"The fifth resolution authorised the President to cable to the India Office and to the Lord Mayor urging the immediate opening of public subscriptions."

Everybody knows what followed the publication of these emphatic resolutions in the British Press. The Press, without distinction of political party, started upon a vigorous campaign against the delays and the sophisms of the India Office, and the India Office was compelled to give way. The Mansion House Fund ought to have been opened earlier. But Lord George Hamilton has gone out of his way to make it perfectly clear that what stung him into consent even at the eleventh hour was the criticisms of the Press, imformed and inspired by the Indian National Congress.

Nor is the achievement of the Congress in respect of the famine limited to spurring on a dilatory and incompetent Minister, and stimulating the benevolence of a charitable public. The Congress resolutions have also directed public attention in the United Kingdom to the hidden causes of the economic malady of

which the present famine is an awful symptom. The delegates at Calcutta unanimously declared, what indeed ought to be sufficiently obvious, that the cause of famine in India is the poverty of the people. But they also went further, and traced this poverty to its source. The masses of the Indian people are poor, not because their country is barren or its climate intractable, but largely because the taxgatherer has drained away their resources, not for reproductive works, but for an extravagant policy in the civil and military—especially the military—departments of Government. This contention is not new to our readers. But at this particular moment, when all eyes are turned towards India, it ought to receive some at least of the attention which it deserves. The misappropriation of the Famine Fund for military purposes, and for the increment of official salaries, is a scandal which cannot be condemned in too emphatic terms. But it is an incident and a detail compared with the general system which has its centre in harsh taxation and its circumference in extravagant, unfruitful, and to a great extent foreign expenditure. It is not, we think, suggested that the revenue raised in India is absolutely more than the country, suitably developed and economically administered, would be capable of producing. But it is contended that the actual burden should suit the back that is to bear it, that the present taxation of India is too heavy for her present taxable capacity, and that of this taxation a portion—great every year, and appalling in the aggregate—is taken out of the country without any equivalent return. No Mansion House Fund, however generous, and no individual administrators, however well-intentioned, can repair the consequences of an inherent defect in the system of Government. Where a disease is chronic and grievous and widespread it needs, as Tiberius on a well-known occasion reminded the Roman Senate, remedies as drastic as the evil is acute. The present famine is of the nature of a warning to the rulers of India that the time has come for searchings of heart, and for some far-reaching revision of existing principles and methods of administration. If this warning be neglected, in spite of the loyal representations of the Indian National Congress, it may hereafter be repeated in another and not less calamitous form.

One of the earliest resolutions of the Twelfth Congress demanded, now for the twelfth time, the separation of judicial from executive duties in India—in other words, the reform of a system under which one and the same officer may undertake the several tasks of detective, public prosecutor, and judge, or, as more commonly happens, look into a case as an executive officer, and control the decision of a judicial subordinate. The apologists of this amazing system have taken up successive positions in its defence, and have been driven in turn from each of them. Their last refuge is the theory, or the statement, that the union of incompatible duties is necessary to the "prestige" of an Oriental magnate. No Secretary of State has ever dared, or will ever dare, to offer that maxim to the House of Commons. What is wanted is to secure the actual reform of a makeshift arrangement condemned in theory—to see to it, in short, that the actions of the Secretary of State square with his professions. Equally familiar is the reiterated demand that effect shall be given to the resolution of the House of Commons in favour of holding in India, as well as in London, examinations for appointments in the Indian Civil Service. Some English critics—and friendly critics, too—are heard to say that this excellent demand has grown a little stale. But it has never been satisfied. If the subject has begun to bore Englishmen who read about it, how much more irritating the persistent disregard of a legitimate request must be to those who urge it. It will be an evil day for all concerned if neglect, not always removed from insolence, should make some Indians think, as some Irishmen came to think, that argument is useless, and nothing but violence excites attention. We need not, at this moment, refer in detail to the remaining resolutions. Public opinion in India, so far as it is at all articulate, protests against the exclusion of Indians from the higher posts in the Civil Service, the oppressiveness of the salt tax, the extortionate demands of the central government upon the local governments, the disabilities imposed on British Indian subjects in South Africa, the Coolie Emigration Act, the frequent enhancement of land revenue, and the deposition of Indian princes or chiefs without public trial. On the other hand, the people of India ask for the extension of trial by jury throughout the country, reform of the medical service, local control over liquor and drug shops, the abolition of that indiscriminate increase of Europeans' salaries which is plausibly entitled "exchange compensation allowance," the establishment of a High Court in the Punjab, the foundation of agricultural banks and technical schools, and the development of Indian Universities from examining boards into teaching institutions. These proposals, or some of them, thanks to the combined ignorance and indifference of those who might grant relief but do not, may lack novelty. But will any fair-minded observer deny their essential fairness, utility, and moderation? Nothing could well be more stimulating to the Congress than the absurdly unfair attack which the Secretary of State made upon it, and its friends, on January 26th. On the other hand nothing could be more foolish and inopportune from the point of view of himself and his official advisers.

BOSWELL'S JOHNSON.[1]

Securus iudicat orbis terrarum. To read Boswell's Johnson, whether for the first or the fifth time, is to impress oneself with the applicability of this maxim to literature. It may be that when, yielding to the gentle pressure of our elders, we first set ourselves the task of mastering the formidable volumes, we approached it in the spirit of the old Scotch lady who was given a novel of Barrie's to read—"I've wrastled "through wi' mony a tougher job, and, please God, "I'll wrastle through with this"—but that is not the spirit in which we turn to the volumes again. No: *securus iudicat orbis terrarum*: the world is right in according to this the first place amongst biographies.

The present generation is certainly doing handsomely by Boswell in the magnificent housing which it gives him. A few years ago a sumptuous and elaborate edition passed through the Clarendon Press under the careful editorship of Dr. Birkbeck Hill; and now Messrs. Constable have given us, under Mr. Birrell's direction, an edition that is at once beautiful and within the reach of modest purses. Let us hope that all this is not a mere building of the sepulchres of the prophets, and that the public reads as well as buys the greatest biography in the English, or indeed in any, language.

Why Boswell, who was very far from being a great man, should have written so great and attractive a biography is an often discussed question. "Sir," said Johnson to him once, "You have but "two subjects, yourself and me; I am sick of both." But his readers never grow sick of either. For Boswell himself they come to feel a certain affection, though they cannot feel much respect. "His absurd "vanity and the greedy craving for notoriety at any "cost," says Mr. Leslie Stephen, "would have made "Boswell the most offensive of mortals, had not his "unfeigned good-humour disarmed enmity." His candour is amazing, and it is not easy to be indignant at faults that he never attempts to hide. Besides, we owe him so large a debt for his faithful record of Dr. Johnson's conversations that we should be churlish indeed if we did not forgive him something in return. Yet lovers of his book have seldom done justice to the genius of the author. The very faithfulness of the narrative, as Mr. Stephen points out, has had the effect of making the narrator's part seem purely mechanical. Let those who think meanly of such work follow Mr. Stephen's advice, and try for themselves whether it is easy to write down from memory the pith of a good conversation to which they have had the luck to listen.

The first and most obvious merit of the Life lies in this unequalled reporting of unequalled conversations. Of the talk of an eminent contemporary, Johnson said that it was "not impelled by any ful- "ness of knowledge or vivacity of imagination." In Johnson's own conversation these two qualities were present in the superlative degree. And his friends and acquaintances paid willing homage to his powers. One day Boswell and others were talking of him as they awaited his arrival. When he came, "we were "all as quiet as a school upon the entrance of the "head-master."

The full and original title of the biography claims that it exhibits "a view of literature and literary "men in Great Britain for near half a century." It is a fascinating picture, with curiously strong lights and shadows. On the one hand, we are brought face to face with scenes of the direst poverty. Even the great men of literature, Goldsmith and Johnson, have their periods of almost incredible destitution. Pathos and humour meet in the story told by Johnson of one poor author pacing the London streets at night because he cannot pay for a lodging, and finding a literary friend asleep upon a bulk. Derrick, the awakened sleeper, started up and said with great presence of mind, "My dear Floyd, I am sorry "to see you in this destitute state; will you go home "with me to my lodgings?" Johnson himself had walked the streets for want of a lodging in his younger days. On the other hand, was there ever a period when literature claimed more respect from the great ones of the earth, and with more success? The mob might well stare at the sage, "dressed in "rusty brown, with a pair of old shoes for slippers, "a shrivelled wig on the top of his head, and with "shirt-sleeves and the knees of his breeches hanging "loose," escorting a French lady of distinction from his chambers to her coach. With what dignity he comports himself in his interview with the king, accepting the royal compliments as the rightful recognition of intellectual pre-eminence! And how magnificent is his rebuke to Lord Chesterfield, who had withheld his patronage when it was needed, and gave it unasked when it was no longer wanted! "Is "not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with un- "concern on a man struggling for life in the water, "and when he has reached the ground encumbers "him with help? The notice which you have been "pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, "had been kind; but it has been delayed until I am "indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary "and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not "want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not "to confess obligations where no benefit has been "received, or to be unwilling that the public should "consider me as owing that to a patron which Pro- "vidence has enabled me to do for myself." Johnson could afford to laugh at himself, as when in his

[1] "Boswell's Life of Johnson." In six volumes. Edited by Augustine Birrell. (London: Archibald Constable and Co.)

dictionary he defined a lexicographer "a harmless "drudge"; but he would submit to indignities from nobody else. His relations with publishers were happy enough; but Boswell tells a humorous story of a dinner of London booksellers, at which Johnson kept the head of the table, though it was inconveniently near the fire, because the superior dignity of authorship would have been compromised by his acceptance of a lower place.

But the unique charm of this biography, the greatness of the subject, is only realized when to the picture of Dr. Johnson, as the great conversationalist, and as the great literary dictator of his age, we add the picture of the tender heart under the rugged exterior. He had nothing of the bear but the skin, said Goldsmith of him truly. His devotion to his wife and mother, his intense kindness to relatives and dependents, are impressed upon us again and again. And there are few more moving incidents, true or imagined, in the whole range of English literature than Dr. Johnson's self-imposed penance in Uttoxeter market. Fifty years before, his father, confined by illness, had asked him to take his place to sell books at a stall at Uttoxeter, and in his pride he had refused. "I desired to "atone for this fault. I went to Uttoxeter in very "bad weather, and stood for a considerable time "bareheaded in the rain, on the spot where my "father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, "and I hope the penance was expiatory." Johnson's life might furnish a great historical artist with subjects for a whole gallery of paintings; and in such a gallery this would be the noblest picture of all.

ENGLAND AND INDIA.

BY WILLIAM CLARKE,
Editor of "The Progressive Review."

I have been asked to express an opinion on the questions arising out of the terrible famine which has visited so large a part of India. I do so with some difficulty, because I hold views which are supposed to be unpopular in England as regards English rule in India. They are, however, views which were held by Mr. Bright and by not a few of the really serious political thinkers of our time. In one word, I disbelieve in British rule in India altogether. I hold it to have been a misfortune for both England and India when the English first made their attempts to effect an empire in India. This kind of view is, I believe, called "unpatriotic" in this country, for it is so fatally easy to use some catch-word where argument is lacking. Let us, however, look at the facts and reason of the thing without troubling our heads about patriotism. "East is East and West is West," says Rudyard Kipling, and he says so truly. The epigram shows at once the fatal difficulty in the way of any attempt on the part of a country like India and a country like England to assimilate.

But assimilation is essential to any genuine political union. If we cannot get at the real mind of the various populations of India or come into any vital contact with them, what is the necessary inference? That India, not being truly incorporated into a union, will be held by brute force. That force may or may not be overtly displayed, but it will always be there, ready to be used in a moment if necessary. It is true that all government is founded on force, but since the French and American Revolutions, it has been recognised that governments derive their powers from the consent of the governed. There is no other source of government in the Western world to-day. But India is not so governed. It is governed, it is taxed, it is "run" generally, without the slightest appeal to the wishes of the governed.

We are told that this is necessary. I am not an expert, and I cannot therefore say. But if this contention of the Anglo-Indian organs and officials be true, it is at once the greatest condemnation of English rule in India that can be imagined. For the English political system is founded in theory and practice on popular consent. We do not live up to our ideal but still that is the ideal. Now, how can a government founded on that basis be a success in India, on the hypothesis of the Anglo-Indian class, and how can it fail to do great harm to England herself? In one continent England appears as a self-governing community, in another, she is an inefficient despotism. I say inefficient, for the record of this terrible famine shows her inefficiency, to use no harsher word, and because if she became a despotism in earnest of the genuine Oriental type a hostile feeling would manifest itself in England which would compel the relinquishment of methods extremely distasteful to all liberty-loving Englishmen themselves.

The Indian Government, therefore, reacts alike on England and on India in dubious ways, and it cannot, in my judgment as a serious student of politics and history, ever be a success. I will venture to lay down the doctrine which, I believe, cannot seriously be disputed: that no democracy or free state can govern another which is not free or democratic without one of two things happening. Either the despotism must be relaxed and finally got rid of, or the governing country will herself gradually sink into despotism or at best a mere oligarchy. If this can be true, I contend that we must either be prepared to give over gradually to the peoples of India the control of their own country or countries, or we must be prepared to give up free institutions in England. Two cannot walk together unless they are agreed.

What is the Government of India at bottom? It is a military bureaucracy. No one will dispute that, as a government, it has many virtues. There are excellent men serving in India in both civil and military positions, with just and humane ideas. It is probably true that the great mass of civil servants in India are thoroughly honest and upright in their work. Some persons seem to think that when you have said this you have said all. But good men may be administering an impossible system, and I

believe this to be the case in India. The system means that a certain wealthy class in England and Scotland has a complete grip of India. The native population is shut out from all the important posts, which are held, not only by Englishmen, but by rich Englishmen in the main, because only these can afford the education necessary to gain these posts. This class demands high salaries as compensation for the troubles of climate and isolation from home and friends. It demands large pensions, and it refuses to spend these in the country which raises them by taxation, and which is the poorest country in the world. The government being military in essence, the expenditure is necessarily determined by military considerations, not by the needs and wishes of the natives. This is not inhumanity of a conscious kind, it is the "system."

So we have the terrible economic drain on India, which has grown steadily, and which must grow so long as the "system" is maintained and grows. In relation to England the effects are also disastrous. The rich Anglo-Indian returns to swell the idle class in England, to lower the moral tone of English life (see Kipling's stories), and to help the forces of reaction at home. I contend, therefore, that, from a progressive point of view, the government of India by England is a source of fruitful danger to both countries. The danger is not in the slightest degree mitigated by good intentions on the part of Englishmen in India, or by subscriptions got up in London when a famine is slowly murdering the unhappy natives. These are excellent as showing human feeling at work, but all the human feeling and all the good intentions in the world are of little value against an impossible system.

Our very virtues are against us in India. Our people at home would never allow a ruthless, sharp, stern despotism, putting terror into the hearts of everyone, to be maintained for forty-eight hours. At any rate, they would not until they lost all sense of liberty at home. And yet one feels that a stern Maratta rule would have really been more kind and more efficient in India than the illogical and impossible rule established there in the English name. A short, sharp conflict of races is brutal indeed, but it is far less cruel than the slow bleeding to death of millions which is going on under English rule, and which will continue to go on so long as the present system endures substantially unmodified. The economic drain is no accident, it is an essential part of a vicious system.

All this will be denounced as horribly unpatriotic by the Anglo-Indian, but as it happens to be true, I am not affected by the charge. The contrast presented by the Native States to British India is sufficient proof that it is the English "system" that is wrong. How could it be otherwise, when a Western people undertake to look after an Eastern people, of whose real life they know nothing, with whom they are still utterly out of touch, even after all these years? I should be surprised at any other result, and I have no doubt that any other west European nation would have made even a worse mess of it than we.

But there are the facts, it may be said. It is no use discussing the question of whether we ought to have gone to India or not. We are there, and we must make the best of it. This is true in a sense, but it may be misleading. If my contention that a Western people with constitutional government cannot in the long run govern an Eastern people under despotic forms be true, then the sole solution of the problem must be that we should give up the impossible, should abandon the task which nature declares to be hopeless. By this I do not mean that we should instantly clear out, bag and baggage, but that we should immediately set about the task with earnestness and sincerity, of giving the government of the peninsula into the hands of the native populations. This is the one sane and just solution. Let all places in the civil service be freely opened to educated natives, and let them have a prior claim to Englishmen. Thus, official salaries could at once be reduced, and the enormous drain of pensions to be spent in England would gradually cease. Let all fancied "imperial" necessities in the shape of expeditions about frontiers got up, not in India but in military interests, be paid for by England. The meanness of making Indians pay for expeditions in Egypt is one of the most infamous incidents of modern times. With an economically administered government, taxation would decline. Let the House of Commons, if that body is really good for anything, recollect that in the last century, some of the most famous men who ever sat in it impeached Warren Hastings for cruelties, compared with which those now inflicted are infinitely more terrible, and be prepared to impeach any Indian official who dares to take from the famine fund money for the purposes of expeditions dictated by the military class, and demand the dismissal of the Indian Secretary who approves and abets such a crime.

Above all, let the masses of this country be enlightened as to the wrongs committed in their name. I admit, with sorrow, that many of our people are apathetic, ignorant, and ready to fall into the arms of the rich class whose power threatens our liberty. But the mass of the people mean well, and they have never had put before them the facts of India in such a way as to interest and enlighten them. The House of Commons shirks its duties, and both political parties decline to take up the burden of Indian wrong and sorrow. Let there be a crusade in the large towns and the rural villages of England, and let the tale of Indian poverty be told in all its naked truth. But let us make up our minds that nothing can touch the springs of that poverty and misery, now welling up into a great river of discontent, until we have seen clearly that every day which is not used to help the peoples of India to get possession of India is a day lost for the good of India. There is no other solution of the problem. At least such is my opinion.

The Social Democratic Federation is organising a great meeting, which is to be held at St. James's Hall on February 10th, with reference to the Indian Famine, and its causes. The chief resolution will follow the lines of the amendment which Mr. H. M. Hyndman desired to submit to the meeting at the Mansion House on January 16th. It will call attention to the misappropriation of the Famine Insurance Fund, and to the "yearly drain of produce from India to England, of a value of not less than £20,000,000, without any commercial return whatsoever, to meet home charges, pensions, and interest."

OUR LONDON LETTER.

There was a good House on January 26th to listen to the debate on Sir W. Wedderburn's amendment to the Address. The statement that there was a stampede to the Lobby at the close of questions is as inaccurate as the statement that Sir William withdrew his amendment.

Sir W. Harcourt, Sir H. Fowler, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Seale-Hayne, and Mr. T. E. Ellis occupied the Front Opposition Bench, while on the Treasury Bench, Mr. Hanbury sat with Lord G. Hamilton. The attendance of members throughout was unusually large for an Indian debate.

The number of those who voted for the amendment was 90, besides the tellers, Sir W. Wedderburn and Mr. H. J. Wilson. Of these 90 four were members of the late Liberal Government, namely, Sir Robert T. Reid, Q.C. (Attorney-General), the Right Hon. C. Seale-Hayne (Paymaster-General), Mr. T. Burt (Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade), and Mr. William Woodall (Financial Secretary to the War Office). The Right Hon. C. H. Hemphill also voted with Sir W. Wedderburn.

The supporters of the amendment included, besides the tellers, forty-eight members of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, namely, Messrs. Bayley, Brigg, Caldwell, Channing, Clark, Condon, Curran, Dalziel, Donelan, Flynn, Gilhooly, Goddard, Hogan, D. B. Jones, William Jones, Kearley, Kilbride, Lambert, Langley, Logan, Lough, Luttrell, McNeill, M'Kenna, M'Leod, Morgan, Pickersgill, Provand, Roberts, Robson, John Roche, J. Samuel, Schwann, Sheehy, Stanhope, Thomas, Tuite, Walton, Whittaker, Carvell Williams, Wilson (Durham), Wilson (Govan), Wilson (Middlesbrough), Young, and Yoxall, and Sir C. Dilke, Sir E. T. Gourley, and Sir J. Leng.

No Conservative member voted for the amendment.

The Royal Commission on Indian expenditure resumed its sittings at the India Office on Wednesday, January 27th, under the Chairmanship of Lord Welby. The sitting was taken up with the examination of Mr. H. Morgan-Browne, formerly Secretary to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Mr. Morgan-Browne came through the ordeal with brilliant success, and was able to display such a mastery of the facts and figures of Indian finance as to disarm cross-examination by the experts on the Commission. The importance of this achievement may be gathered from the fact that Mr. Morgan-Browne "put in" as the basis of his evidence the various financial documents — dealing, for example, with Sir J. Westland's Budgets—which were issued by the British Committee in his time. We understand that he also "put in" a brief statement of the leading contentions which these documents seek to establish, and that none of these contentions was shaken in cross-examination. Mr. Morgan-Browne is to be congratulated upon a piece of work which should contribute in no small degree to the practical value of the Commission's final report.

As we announced some time ago, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will be examined as a witness before the Royal Commission, his evidence in chief being the various memoranda that he has from time to time communicated to his colleagues upon many of the most important questions with which the Commission has to deal. We understand that, besides Mr. Wacha, another Indian witness will come over from India for the purpose of giving evidence. When the evidence of these gentlemen has been taken the Commission will, it is expected, proceed almost immediately to the consideration of its Report—which, therefore, may perhaps be looked for in a few months' time.

Mr. H. J. Wilson, M.P., has given notice that on an early day he will call attention in the House of Commons to the state of the army, especially in India, as regards venereal disease; and will move a resolution.

The debate on Sir W. Wedderburn's amendment to the Address (January 26) attracted a good deal of attention in the Press. Limits of space prevent us from quoting at length, but the following brief extracts may be interesting. The *Daily News* wrote:

"It is to be regretted that Sir Henry Fowler did not protest last night in the debate on Sir William Wedderburn's amendment to the Address, against Lord George Hamilton's extremely foolish and unseemly attack upon the Indian National Congress. The Indian National Congress does not of course represent the whole, or anything like the whole, of India. No such representation is possible. But the Congress consists of able and enlightened men. Lord Dufferin always treated the Congress with courtesy and respect, as did Lord George's own colleague, Lord Lansdowne. To say that the Congress "never lost an opportunity of attacking the British Administration," which it persistently upholds and maintains, shows an ignorance so gross as to be hardly credible in an educated reader of the newspapers, and quite portentous in a Secretary of State. Lord George's defence of the uses to which the famine fund has been put is wholly unintelligible. Sir Henry Fowler, evidently feeling this, undertook the task for him, and of course Sir Henry is clear enough. . . . . This is an admirable statement of the official case. But we do not observe that Sir Henry Fowler enumerated the Afghan war among the legitimate objects for the employment of this surplus."

The *Daily Chronicle* wrote:—

"It is impossible to conceive a more moderate and practical suggestion, or one put forward in a more temperate speech, than Sir William Wedderburn's amendment on the Address. It was not, perhaps, to be expected that the Government would accede to it. When the famine is over, an expensive Commission will doubtless be appointed to reckon up the cost in lives and treasure, whose deliberations will be recorded in Blue-books, to be quoted at the beginning of the *next* famine. In the course of the debate much praise was heard of the preparations which the Government of India had been making during past years to meet the approach of dearth. Yet official statistics cannot lie. The *Daily Chronicle* showed only yesterday, and not for the first time, how in the case of the Famine Insurance Fund these preparations were constantly suspended. How then can the British public have confidence that all necessary preparations have been made and all possible precautions taken to ward off the evils of protracted famine?"

In the course of a lengthy and careful leading article the *Manchester Guardian* said:—

"The National Congress may or may not deserve the condemnation which the Secretary of State for India has heaped upon its head, but that is not the question. There is enough in the written and spoken statements of experienced Indian administrators whom everybody respects to show that the chronic poverty of multitudes of people in India is a problem

which demands from the highest statesmanship every possible effort to discover its hidden causes, and as far as possible the removal of these causes. If it be found that some of the more deeply rooted of them lie in the traditions and habits of the people—in premature and improvident marriage, for example, —as good authorities hold, the only possible remedies are educational, and therefore slow in operation. But there is good reason to believe that others are of a character more quickly remediable, and Lord George Hamilton would have earned for himself the approval of intelligent public opinion at home, as well as gratitude in India, not to speak of the disarming of his opponents of the National Congress, if he had intimated that a thorough inquiry of some sort into this most important matter would at the proper time be undertaken."

The *Bradford Observer*, which gave its first leading article to the subject, wrote :—

"The Indian Famine debate in the House last night furnished yet another proof of the difficulty of breaking through an official ring to get at facts which may possibly tend to its discredit, and must inevitably point to the need of reforms. Sir W. Wedderburn's amendment, backed by the prayer of the Indian National Congress, was, in itself, in the highest degree reasonable, and was argued throughout with studious moderation. . . . . For matters of vastly less importance to the vital interests of the Empire the Government is, for the most part, ready enough to grant enquiries; and the least form in which the sympathy of this nation with the suffering millions of India could have been practically expressed was surely that of conceding an impartial enquiry, on behalf of the people of this country, into the causes and remedies of the evil. The mere suggestion of it, however, is sufficient to arm against it the entire world of officialism, which thinks it has nothing more to learn itself, and that the nation should never desire to know more than officialism chooses to inform it; and we have again the not very satisfactory spectacle of a Liberal Minister sheltering his successor in office from deserved and needed criticism."

Immediately before the debate took place on January 26th, a meeting of the Indian Parliamentary Committee was held in the Conference Room of the House of Commons. It is, we believe, proposed to give notice of motions regarding some of the most important of current Indian questions.

Active as Sir W. Wedderburn M.P. is, in the House of Commons and out of it, on behalf of the unrepresented taxpayers of India, it must not be supposed that there are no other political claims upon his time and energy. He has, for example, just been engaged in an important correspondence with the Secretary for Scotland, Lord Balfour, of Burleigh, on the insufficiency of the present grant to the Scottish Fishery Board for fishery harbours. It would appear that this is a matter of life and death to a large and meritorious class. The subject has been again and again brought before Parliament, but without any satisfactory result. The extreme need for improved harbour accommodation is not denied, and sympathy has been expressed on behalf of successive Governments; but hitherto the Treasury has not seen its way to provide the necessary funds. The difficulty is purely a financial one. Sir W. Wedderburn's object therefore in the recent correspondence was to show, by reference to the history of the present grant, how strong the claim of the Scottish fishing industry is, "not only to receive a much ampler yearly allowance, but also to obtain the refund of large sums which have been wrongfully swept into the Imperial Exchequer." In reply to Sir W. Wedderburn, Lord Balfour has written that he is quite willing to discuss the subject with him after the calculations put forward have been fully examined.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

NOTES AND NEWS.

The Mansion House Fund for the relief of the sufferers by the Indian Famine has, at the time of writing, reached the sum of £181,000, and donations are still coming in.

Meantime, a Calcutta telegram dated January 29th states that the first lakh of the money received from the Famine Fund has now been distributed in the various provinces.

The telegram adds that the number of persons engaged on relief works is now two millions, half of whom are so employed in the North-West Provinces.

A special fund is being raised in Lancashire, where the artisans, with their usual generosity, are setting apart for this purpose a regular contribution from their weekly wages.

At the same time the famine is supplying a theme for meetings, lectures, and sermons, and an occasion for the liberality of theatrical managers. The Social Democratic Federation, inspired by Mr. Hyndman, is conducting a specially vigorous campaign.

The British Committee of the Indian National Congress have recently issued to the forty-three Standing Committees of the Congress throughout India a request for regular information by each mail with reference to the famine. Answers are invited in each case to the following questions :—

1. What are (*a*) the name, (*b*) the area, and (*c*) the population of your district?
2. What is the normal yearly rainfall in your district?
3. What was the actual rainfall in your district in 1896?
4. What was the amount of the deficiency of the winter rains, or of the North-East monsoon?
5. What is the average price of grain—and what is the staple grain—in your district?
6. What is now the actual price of grain in your district?
7. What is the average death-rate per thousand in your district?
8. What was the actual number of deaths during the past week? And what is the death-rate per thousand?
9. What are (*a*) the number of persons employed on relief works, (*b*) the condition of the persons on relief, and (*c*) the wages paid to them?
10. Are the measures taken by the Government regarded locally as adequate?
11. Briefly summarise Indian opinion in your district?

It is proposed to issue to the Press and others, weekly "bulletins" of the famine, founded partly upon the information so obtained and partly upon Indian and Anglo-Indian journals which do not usually receive much notice in the United Kingdom.

The Bombay Meeting.

If Indians appeal for charitable help from the United Kingdom, it is not because they do not help themselves. For example, at a public meeting, convened by the Sheriff of Bombay, on December 17th, it was resolved that the time had come to invite further subscriptions to alleviate suffering, and a large and representative Committee was formed for that purpose.

State Relief and Private Charity.

His Excellency, the Governor of Bombay, Lord

Sandhurst, took the chair, and in the course of his speech usefully contrasted the function of State relief and the function of private charity:—

"Whatever may be subscribed in response to my appeal, however great the sum, it will in no way relieve Government of its responsibility; the course and responsibility of Government are clear and distinct enough. Our first object is to save life; our second object is to give relief with due regard to these points—first, that it should not be gratuitous to the able-bodied; secondly, that relief works shall as far as possible be useful in the years to come; and thirdly, that it shall be as little unprofitable as possible. You see therefore that Government relief must be confined to the necessities of the case."

"There is," Lord Sandhurst added, "a wide field for charity:"—

"A class to whom your attention may well be turned is women whose scanty means in such a time place them in the direst need and to whom a little aid from your charitable fund will make all the difference. Orphans and destitute children may be here included, and another direction is that of assisting people in their trades and crafts. The fund opened to-day will remain open. It may be well to earnestly consider as time goes on whether a very useful way of spending some of the money subscribed would not be in measures to assist people in starting again in life, freeing them from embarrassments or the purchase and the gift of agricultural cattle, seed, etc."

Lord Sandhurst's remarks on this subject may be supplemented by this passage from the speech of Mr. Justice Ranade, C.I.E.:—

"It may be asked why, if the Government levies additional taxation and sets it apart expressly for the relief of famine, we should in our private capacity undertake the burden of organising private charity and prefer an appeal to England for help. Ladies and gentlemen, Government relief must be administered, like every other measure of Government, under rules and regulations which do not permit of that elastic application to local circumstances and wants which private charity alone can adequately foresee and provide in time. The system worked by departmental agency has always a tendency to slide into task-work discipline, good in its place, but not adequate for all purposes. It can provide work for those who can work and give subsistence wages to those who can earn them. It can even spare a portion of its resources for gratuitous relief, but over and above and beyond all departmental agencies there must be the sisters of mercy at work to find out distress. The aged and the infirm and the sick and the distressed can never be adequately reached by such official agency, because it cannot afford to be ubiquitous. There again are the respectable poor who will not go to the work, but will choose to suffer and die in the way so graphically described by Mr. Aberigh Mackay in his portraiture of Indian Famine. Then there are the priestly classes and the gosha women, the weavers and the skilled labourers, who cannot be expected to break stones for metalling the roads."

"Charity begins at Home."

Referring to the appeal to the United Kingdom, Mr. Justice Ranade said:—

"If this private charity proves inadequate to the task of meeting a crisis like the famine, the people of this country have a claim upon the sympathies and help of the people of England. (Cheers.) Never has such an appeal been made in the name of the people of this country to their fellow-subjects in England which has not received a royal response. We must be prepared ourselves to do all we can, and then, and then alone, we can successfully make the appeal for English help. Thanks to the philanthropy and fellow-feeling of our mercantile princes, Shet Sir Dinshaw M. Petit, Shet Govindji, Shet Narayandas, Veerchand Deepchand, and many others who may be named, we are not backward in this work."

Similarly, Lord Sandhurst said:

"A general movement is now to be started in Bombay, but let me here point out that the tide of charity has already begun to flow. We have heard already of Hadji Zacheria and the Muhammadan children. Lately I received what I may call a splendid offer from Mr. Chabildas Lallubhai to provide for one hundred poor Hindu children for twelve months. (Cheers.) These are offers of assistance from private members of the two communities of which Bombay may well be proud. (Cheers.) It is proposed to establish an asylum for poor children to be called the Deccan Orphanage, which I believe has the support of all classes of the community. I believe that considerable assistance has been unobtrusively offered by Parsees and many private individuals, and these are facts which encourage me to hope that there will be a generous response to the appeal I am now making."

A Life and Death Struggle.

As to the gravity of the crisis, Mr. Justice Ranade said:—

"The declared purpose of this meeting is to emphasise the fact that the danger that threatens us is not a local disaster or a temporary scarcity, but, to quote the words employed by his Excellency in his speech the other day at the Surat banquet, to announce with authority the fact that the dreaded famine is upon us in a form more widespread than even the visitation of 1876-78. The chronicler of that famine very properly characterised the struggle which was then maintained as a campaign. It is a struggle literally of life and death to many lakhs of our fellow-countrymen."

And Lord Sandhurst was hardly less emphatic:—

"There is this to be remembered, that while the failure of crops is not so extensive as in 1876, and this scarcity does not this year follow on a scarcity of the preceding year, scarcity in other parts of India has had a very marked effect on us in the rise of prices, which has been universal. Week by week statements are furnished to the public. I need not here go into figures; what I can do is to conscientiously assure the citizens of Bombay that there is a wide field for your charitable efforts; it is a cause in which charity can most reasonably be asked for; it is difficult to name a limit to the sum required; too much cannot be given, provided it is carefully organised and judiciously dispensed." (Hear, hear.)

"Bis Dat Qui Cito Dat."

Mr. Javerilal U. Yajnik laid stress upon the importance of "prompt and ready relief":—

"The principle that he who gives quickly gives twice, was never more in need of practical application than at the present moment. (Cheers.) And for this reason. It strikes me that the great object of relief, whether public or private, is, next to preservation of life, to prevent the disruption of village organisation in the affected districts. A high authority on Indian famine administration, the late Sir James Caird, attached great importance to this village organisation. In his report on the famine twenty years ago, he called it 'the sheet-anchor of Indian state-craft.' He thought that the great difficulty hitherto felt in famine administration arose from the disorganisation of the village society. To preserve this village society intact in future he recommended the adoption of two steps. One was that the relief to the famine-stricken people should be given in good time, that is to say, while the people were in health and working condition. The other was that relief should be given in a form which the people would accept. Now with regard to the first recommendation it seems to me that private charity can very well step in to supplement the efforts of Government to prevent the disorganisation of village society."

"People Dying Daily on the Roads."

The Calcutta *Englishman* of December 30th contains the full text of the letter from Mr. J. P. Goodridge, late Divisional Judge, Jabalpur, a brief summary of which was telegraphed three weeks ago. Mr. Goodridge writes as follows of the condition of things in the Jabalpur district:—

"Everywhere there are traces of the greatest suffering. People emaciated to a terrible degree are now aimlessly wandering about and dying daily on the roads. At present there are

more than 1,700 persons in the Jabalpur poor-house, many in the last stage of exhaustion and collapse, and the medical officer in charge tells me that but few of them have any chance of recovering. Visitors to the surrounding villages report that the state of things in the interior of the other districts comprising the division is quite as bad as it is here, and that every respectable stranger is surrounded by crowds of starving people clamouring for food. I was deputed to Madras on famine duty during the great famine of 1877, when it is estimated that upwards of five millions of persons perished, and I then held charge of a portion of the most afflicted district (Cuddapah), but I never at any time saw anything there worse than the Jabalpur poor-house."

CONCLUSIVE STATISTICS.

Mr. Goodridge remarks that the *Central Provinces Gazette* furnishes "evidence more definite and conclusive than impressions, in the shape of an appalling increase in the death-rate."

"Here are a few figures for the five districts which compose the Jabalpur Division. Last year's death-rate was given in the C. P. Government resolution on the Report of the Sanitary Commissioner of the Province as 36·75 per mille per annum, and the year was described as 'abnormally unhealthy.' It was remarked that the excess 'mortality' was due to the distress which prevailed throughout a large portion of the Province.

"In September (the last month for which we have complete statistics) the death-rate had risen in Jabalpur to 97·38, in Saugor to 98·68, in Damoh to 138·07, in Seoni to 70·72, in Mundla to 108·28, and in Marwara (a tahsil in Jabalpur) to 103·21.

"In some of the towns the figures are even more appalling, though epidemic disease did not contribute to the ghastly result.

"The death-rates per mille were:—

"Jabalpur City, 110·02.

"Marwara Town, 182 66.

"Sihora Town, 225·59.

"We have not later figures, but the distress has since grown more acute.

"And yet, with these figures published 'by authority,' His Excellency the Viceroy, on the occasion of his recent visit to Jabalpur, solemnly congratulated its residents 'on the prosperous appearance of the country,' and his only reference to the famine was that the Chief Commissioner had called his attention 'to the probability of distress in a part of his province.'"

"A TRULY SHOCKING STATE OF THINGS."

Mr. Goodridge says that this situation was the growth of months, and that, in the opinion of all classes, the authorities had delayed too long to make adequate provision for the distress. "The fault lies with those who have, or ought to have had, an intimate acquaintance with the condition of the people."

"The history of the past famines proves conclusively that what is known as a famine of labour can only be met successfully at the outset, and people must be kept in fair condition. If they be allowed to fall below a certain point and become enfeebled, future efforts can avail but little to restore them to health. The famine has already got the start of the very inadequate measures adopted to cope with it. I send you photographs of two groups of inmates of the Jabalpur poor-house, taken just as they stood in line for their daily inspection. They are not selected specimens, and from them you will be able to judge for yourself as to the condition of a considerable proportion of the people of this division."

The Editor of the *Englishman* appends a note to the effect that these photographs "reveal a truly shocking state of things." Mr. Goodridge continues:—

"The Government of India in its official communications has proceeded on the principle that private charity is not needed in affording gratuitous relief, and that it is the duty of the State to do everything required to combat the famine. We have seen the result of the policy in the excess death-rate, and in the miserable objects collected in the poor-houses. . . . Much could be done by private effort to visit those who cannot leave their homes either from exhaustion or custom. A well-organised system of village reliefs and village works working in co-operation with the village headman would do much to alleviate suffering and afford succour to many. The Government poor-houses are most repulsive to the people, and the inmates will not remain in them unless they are too feeble to move or are forcibly kept there, and not allowed to wander about the streets. They call loudly for bread. Their food is a ration of rice, of which they get nine chattaks with a little pulse and salt. The officers in charge of these poor-houses are unwearied in their exertions, but it is plain they need the co-operation of private citizens. . . . It is surprising to us here that at the present moment the India Office, relying solely on the sanguine reports from India, still ignore the necessity of appealing to the generous British public for aid in the famine campaign."

CONDITION OF PERSONS ON RELIEF WORKS.

The most recent telegram from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State declares that there are now 1,332,000 persons on relief works, and the figures for the North West Provinces and Oudh are incomplete. It is important to ask what is the condition, and the treatment, of these people. Some of the accounts given in the newspapers are by no means re-assuring. For example, we take this paragraph from the *Lahore Tribune*:—

"That many famine-stricken people do not go to relief works is not surprising in the light of the following: The condition of the workers (at Patas in Poona District), about 1,800 in number, is very distressing. The work assigned to them is metal-breaking, and it is exacted from them with excessive severity. The hands of several women and children are already swollen by this hard work, and yet no indulgence is shown to them. They must either continue their task or forego the pittance thrown to them as wages."

Excellent work is being done in India by local associations and committees, not only in holding meetings and raising subscriptions, but also in instituting independent enquiries for the information of the authorities. The Bombay Presidency Association, for example, has drawn up a useful report upon the famine districts in the Bombay Presidency. The writer comments on the hard labour of the relief works and adds:—

"The relief people [at Hotgi] sent a telegram of protest to the Governor. They have received no reply to it, but in the bargain, Mr. Chakravarty levied a fine of annas 3 per male and female labourer, and annas 2-6 per working child above 7 years of age, and the people had quietly to accept lowest possible wages, which I am told were given to them on the 10th instant, that is to say, the wages for the week of 30th November to 6th December were actually in their hands on the 11th January, from the date they commenced their work for the week. I will give you two illustrations:—

"(*a*) A child above 7 years worked for 6 days, 30th November to 5th December. His wages at anna 1 and pies 2 for the 6 days were calculated at 7 annas. His allowance for Sunday, the 6th December, which is a non-working day, was calculated at 9 pies. The total is annas 7 and pies 9. They deducted fine for the week at annas 2 and pies 6, and paid the lad only annas 5 and pies 3, *i.e.*, at 9 pies per day, instead of for 24 pies which he was entitled to get, supposing that the wages given were fair.

"(*b*) A male labourer's wages per day are anna 1 and 3 pies only. For 6 working days he is entitled to annas 7 and pies 6. His Sunday allowance is anna 1. Total, annas 7 and pies 7. Deducted annas 3 fine for the week, and he got annas 4 and pies 7 only. That is to say, the labourer got about 8 pies a day, instead of 13 pies a day, to which he was entitled.

"A Mokadum's case is still harder. There were 30 Mokadums on the works near about the Engineers' Bungalows. They were to get annas 2 each per day; at this rate, for 6 working days, they would get Rs. 3-12, and then Sunday allowance at anna 1 and pies 3 each would be annas 6 and pies 6. Total, Rs. 4-2-6. They were fined 2 annas each—15 annas for the lot. Deducting this they got Rs. 3-3-6 only."

An anna, it may be noted, is equivalent to three halfpence, and a pie is half a farthing.

THE CASE OF THE CHILDREN.

The Special Correspondent of the Calcutta *Englishman*, writing from Jhansi on December 22nd, said:—

"In my account of the Saga poor-house I did not mention that the death-rate some time ago was as high as ten a day. . . . The case of the children excites my compassion the more I see of them. They are everywhere the pictures of hopelessness and the innocent victims of neglect, of selfishness, or of cruelty. They do nothing but look wistful by the hour and die without complaining. . . . . Thousands of homes were broken up before the relief works began. I write of the country at large, not of this place. The father went one way and the mother another, in search of work, in many cases never to meet again, and the children were left in the deserted hut.

"I met some Swedes in Sagar, of a Mission which is one of the poorest in India, who keep their books and write their reports in a language which makes them useless for circulating among the English residents. They had taken charge of fifty children, and were doing their little best for them. But the report will go to Stockholm, and whatever help comes will come from there."

INDIAN OPINION.

"The public has heard nothing yet of deaths from hunger through official channels, but, strange to stay, it has been fully convinced through private sources that such deaths are, and for some time past have been, occurring in considerable numbers and in different provinces. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal is the only head of an administration who has confessed, very recently, his great anxiety as to where actual food is to come from, even if money be ready for purchasing it, to save life: and yet Bengal is much closer to the sea than provinces worse afflicted by crop failure. But much more fatal than the above general reticence is the omission till so late of Government to furnish the best figures available in every threatened province which would be a reliable guide to up-country dealers and merchants at our ports for operating ahead—it takes nearly two months to arrange for importing wheat from California. For instance, so long as importers reasonably fear that a fall of rain may send down prices after they have contracted for wheat and turn their anticipated profit into a loss, it is absurd to expect any but perhaps an occasional wild speculator to enter the market at all"—*The Englishman*, (Calcutta).

"The optimism of the Viceroy and his light-hearted utterances about the famine will, we are afraid, stop the flow of English charity at a time when it is urgently needed. What a sad commentary it is on the utterances of Lord Elgin that the mortality in Jubblepore and other parts of the Central Provinces should be above 100 per mille, and people should be found dying on the road sides when his Excellency sees nothing but smiling fields and prosperous country! Unhappy is the country which should at this critical juncture have a Viceroy who would not give up his pleasure trips when people are dying of hunger! What kind of hardihood is it that will ask the English people not to begin subscribing to a charitable fund for the relief of the Indians, and which will not take timely steps to prevent the loss of life?—*The Indu-Prakash* (Bombay).

"The relief-works have failed to reach the people who are suffering from the famine, and it is a most astonishing fact that the Government of India would refuse even to lend the sanction of their authority to the raising of further money, which, in the very nature of things, is bound to go further in relieving distress. They have let the fund, which they held in sacred trust for the people for the relief of distress, flow into the frontier sink. They have broken their plighted faith. And yet they think it beneath their dignity to ask England for the help, which will enable them to save many lives!"—*The Indian Mirror* (Calcutta).

"What is the Government doing to provide against the famine, looming like a shroud over the people, instead of arranging for importing food on an adequate scale? The limit of its statesmanship is reached when it has ordered a ship-load of horse carrot seed for starving people. Lord Elgin blandly assures the Home authorities that there is no need whatever for help in the shape of public subscriptions, as the Government of India is quite able to cope with the trifling distress that exists. Was ever such a fatuous counsel heard from the lips of a responsible ruler. By and bye money will be of no use when the food-stocks of the country are exhausted. The money will merely mock people's sufferings. The Government will then begin to think of importing grain, but they may save themselves the trouble during the months that must elapse before it can be brought to the people's doors. Central and the North-East Provinces will be converted into a huge grave-yard."—*The Statesman* (Calcutta).

"Is Lord Elgin well advised in passing by, for the second and the third time, formal offers of help from the British nation, in India's hour of need? That he is actuated by some worthy motive, we have no reason to doubt. It may also be that he has taken up this strange attitude, not merely on his own responsibility. We are prepared to make allowance for the difficulties of his position, and harbour not a single bitter thought in this season of peace and amity. But we should like to know if his Council and the higher executive, on whose information Lord Elgin acts, share his opinion on this point. To refuse such aid as the richest member of the Empire has generously offered to the poorest, to dilly-dally about a matter of life and death to millions, and thus, at any rate, to forego the warmth and spontaneity of that magnificent offer, appears to the outsider to be a policy suicidal on the face of it. Is there a political reason dictating such a policy? Are the Government afraid of making the best of the British offer, lest they should be morally constrained to accept Russia's offer of aid also? Or, are Government determined to show to the world that they can manage a vast natural calamity with their own unaided resources? Whatever the cause, the effect threatens to prove disastrous."—*The Indian Spectator* (Bombay).

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

TWELFTH SESSION.

GREAT ENTHUSIASM.

OVER 4,000 PERSONS PRESENT.

CALCUTTA, DEC. 28.

The twelfth Indian National Congress met in this city to-day, under the presidency of the Hon. R. M. Sayani, member of the Viceregal Council. Sir Romesh Mitter, late Chief Justice of Bengal, who is chairman of the Reception Committee, was absent, owing to indisposition, and his place was taken by Mr. Ghose, late member of the Viceregal Council, who welcomed the delegates and read the speech which Sir Romesh Mitter had prepared. In this address the late Chief Justice pointed out that the Congress ought to be considered a help to the Government, whose attitude, therefore, should be sympathetic, enabling the Government of India to be administered on the lines of the Queen's proclamation in the interests of the various Indian communities.

The president, who addressed the Congress, sub-

sequently evoked great enthusiasm by urging his fellow-Mussulmans to give loyal and hearty support to the Congress. He reviewed the work of the Congress from the beginning, laying stress on its loyalty to British rule and eulogising the Queen's beneficent reign.

The Congress has met this year under exceptionally difficult circumstances, owing to the famine and plague. Over 4,000 persons, however, attended to-day's sitting, and 700 delegates from all parts of India inscribed their names on the register. Three hundred and fifty more delegates are expected to arrive to-morrow.—*Reuter*.

SECOND DAY.

JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE DUTIES.

Calcutta, Dec. 29.

The first resolution on the paper, at the second sitting of the Indian National Congress, was one heartily congratulating the Queen-Empress on the attainment of the sixtieth year of her reign, and earnestly hoping that her Majesty may long be spared to rule. The resolution was passed unanimously, all the delegates standing.

The second resolution expressed the thanks of the Congress to Sir William Wedderburn and other members of the British Committee, and accorded a hearty welcome to Mr. W. S. Caine, the committee's delegate.

Mr. Caine responded with a speech, giving full details of the work of the British Committee.

The third resolution demanded the separation of the judicial and executive functions, and recorded with regret the death of Mr. Manomohan Ghose.

The fourth resolution urged that the demands of the Imperial Government on the local government should be limited, and that the latter should spend money for the improvement of its own province.

The fifth resolution demanded that immediate effect should be given to the resolution passed by Parliament in 1893 that civil service examinations should be held simultaneously in England and in India.

The sixth protested against the recent scheme of education for the civil service excluding Indians from the higher posts.

The seventh urged the introduction of the system of trial by jury throughout the country.

The eighth protested against the salt tax.

The ninth resolution sent the warm congratulations of the Congress to Mr. Gladstone on completing his eighty-seventh year.

All the resolutions were passed unanimously, and much enthusiasm prevailed throughout the proceedings. The hall was crowded all day, and a number of visitors were refused admission for want of space. A stong contingent of Mussulman delegates, and some leading Europeans, were present in the visitors' gallery, both yesterday and to-day. The reception committee is gratified by the large number of delegates present.—*Reuter*.

THIRD DAY.

THE INDIAN FAMINE.

THE POVERTY OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE.

"A POLICY OF EXTRAVAGANCE."

Calcutta, Dec. 30.

At the third meeting of the Indian National Congress, to-day, the first resolution adopted protested against the disabilities imposed on Indian settlers in Africa, and appealed to the British and Indian Governments to guard their interests and relieve their disabilities.

The second resolution endorsed the medical reforms advocated by Dr. Bahadurji before the Finance Commission.

The third was a collective resolution demanding excise reforms, a system of effective local option over liquor and drug shops, equal treatment of all sections of the people, an arms Act, the founding of military colleges for the natives of India, and the granting of permission to natives to join volunteer corps, and the abolition of the compensation allowance of the India Council. The same resolution asked for the establishment of a High Court in the Punjab.

In the fourth resolution, the Congress deplores the outbreak of an acute famine throughout India, declaring that this and other famines are due to the great poverty of the people, resulting from the drain of wealth which has continued for many years, owing to excessive taxation and over assessment consequent upon a policy of extravagance in the civil and military departments, so impoverishing the people that at the first touch of scarcity the helpless must perish unless fed by the State.

The Congress declares that the true remedy is the adoption of a policy enforcing economy, the husbanding of the resources of the State, and the fostering of Indian arts and industries now virtually extinguished. The Congress reminds the Government of its solemn duty to save life and mitigate suffering, and appeals to it to redeem its pledges by restoring the famine insurance fund to its original purpose of the relief of the famine stricken.

In view of the fact that private charity in England is ready to flow freely at this awful juncture, and also that large classes of the sufferers can only be reached by private charity, the Congress protests emphatically against the manner in which the Indian Government blocks the way, and earnestly hopes that the disastrous mistake committed by Lord Lytton's Government will not now be repeated.

The fifth resolution authorized the President to cable to the India Office, and to the Lord Mayor, urging the immediate opening of public subscriptions. All these resolutions were passed unanimously.

The sixth resolution called for universal and permanent settlement, and the founding of agricultural banks and technical schools.—*Reuter.*

FOURTH DAY.

"UNABATED CONFIDENCE IN MR. NAOROJI."

Calcutta, Dec. 31.

At the fourth sitting of the Indian National Congress to-day the attendance was well maintained.

The first resolution urged that the Acts of Incorporation of Indian Universities should provide that they should teach and not simply examine.

The second advocated the repeal of the Coolie Emigration Act.

The third urged the appointment of a third member to the Governor's Council in Madras and Bombay.

The fourth demanded that settlement land revenue should be guaranteed for a minimum of 60 years.

The fifth declared it to be desirable that no Indian prince should be deposed until maladministration or misconduct had been proved to the satisfaction of a public tribunal.

The sixth urged the assimilation of the methods of electing the Legislative Council in the Central Provinces to those in force in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay.

The seventh expressed satisfaction at the selection of Mr. Wacha, secretary of the Congress, to give evidence before the Welby Commission.

The eighth declared full and unabated confidence in Mr. Naoroji as a representative of the people of India in the House of Commons, and expressed the hope that he would be re-elected for Finsbury.

The ninth resolution reappointed Mr. Hume as general secretary, and voted the sum of 60,000 rupees for the British Committee.

The next Congress will be held at Benares. The proceedings closed with a vote of thanks to the President, to whom the Muhammadan delegates presented a gold watch and chain, as a memento of his being the second Mussulman president. Three cheers for the Queen-Empress were then given. The proceedings of the Congress were enthusiastic throughout, and are regarded by the members as having been very successful.

Provincial delegates expressed themselves pleased with their reception, and the arrangements made for their entertainment by the leading citizens gave them much gratification. The Mahárájá of Darbhanga visited the Congress and received an ovation. —*Reuter.*

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

The Congress represents the "cultivated and enlightened elements of Indian society."—*Daily News.*

"The Indian National Congress met yesterday for the twelfth time, in Calcutta, and about four thousand natives were present. There is no subject about which greater nonsense is written in the Tory Press. The Congress is alternately denounced as too dangerous to be tolerated, and too contemptible to be considered. It is 'a combination of baboo vanity and intrigue with English twaddle.' This is melancholy drivel. To say that the Congress represents the whole of India would be absurd. But it represents just those cultivated and enlightened elements of Indian society which have been fostered by British rule. The President this year is Mr. Sayani, a member of the Viceregal Council, and a Muhammadan. The Chairman of the Reception Committee is Sir Romesh Mitter, formerly a Judge of the High Court of Bengal. Mr. Sayani, in his presidential address, urged his fellow Mussulmans to join the Congress, as in considerable numbers they have already done. Loyalty to the Queen was emphatically declared, and to call the Congress seditious is the height of absurdity."—*Daily News* (December 29).

"Lessons in good Government."—*Daily Chronicle.*

"It is not enough that the Government should be good, it must also be sympathetic; it is not enough that the Government should be strong and able to keep the peace, it is equally the duty of the Government to teach the people it governs the principles and methods of self-government, so that in time to come the law and order which is imposed from without shall spring from within. Here, then, is the function of the Indian National Congress. That unity of national life and political aim which the Government of India compels from above, the founders of the Congress and the growing number of their disciples are endeavouring to stimulate from within; and those lessons in good government which it has been the pride of the British race to afford in every quarter of the globe are at once the inspiration and the objective of the Indian Congress movement. Incidentally, the Indian Congress serves to make the ways of the Indian Government with its alien Western notions more intelligible and more acceptable to the Eastern mind. This it does by the mere force of circumstances, familiarising by open criticism and reasonable debate much that would otherwise remain the subject of ignorant dislike and secret disaffection. There is yet one other function of the Congress which in the fulness of time it will most assuredly fulfil, and that is that of the respected adviser of the Government of India."—*Daily Chronicle* (Dec. 30th).

"As Successful as Ever."—*Manchester Guardian.*

"The meetings of the twelfth Indian National Congress, which assembled this week at Calcutta, appear to have been as successful as ever. The famine and the plague prevented many delegates from attending, but over a thousand seem to have made their way to Calcutta to take part in the work of the Congress. Mr. Sayani, a distinguished Muhammadan citizen of Bombay, who is a member both of the Viceregal Council and of the Bombay Legislative Council, presided. An ex-Chief Justice of Bengal was chairman of the Reception Committee, and, being prevented by indisposition from attending, was replaced by Mr. Ghose, an ex-member of the Viceregal Council. The proceedings of the Congress have, as usual, been badly reported, but the dele-

gates, speaking for several millions of educated natives of all ranks and professions, are understood to have once more pressed upon the Indian Government the necessity of considering the programme of reforms which the Congress has steadily advocated since 1885. The lightening of the burden of taxation which is ruining India, the expenditure of more money on public works and less on wild military schemes, the admission of educated natives to the higher grades of the Civil Service, the complete separation of the judicial from the administrative staff—these are among the most prominent and the most urgent of the reforms which educated Indians demand, and which England has no right to refuse." —*Manchester Guardian* (Jan. 2nd).

"The Great Representative Assembly of Educated India."—*The Star.*

"Brief—far too brief—telegrams from Calcutta announced the opening yesterday of the twelfth session of the Indian National Congress—the great representative assembly of educated India, and, we have little doubt, the germ of her future Parliament. A certain section of the British Press has for the past dozen years adopted, with regard to the Indian Congress, tactics which deserve to fail if only for their sheer monotony. The game is, at the beginning of December, when preparations for the Congress are being made, to belittle its importance, and describe it as a moribund and obsolete organization of silly nobodies. Then, when the Congress actually meets, these prejudiced critics—and chief among them the *Times* and the *St. James's Gazette*—studiously ignore its proceedings and its demands, and waste their time and their readers' patience in utterly irrelevant, though frequently reiterated, diatribes of the most bitter and most grotesque type. It does not occur to the authors of this annual abuse that if they wish to be heard on the subject of the Indian National Congress, they must address themselves to the questions which need to be asked concerning all political movements—namely (*a*) What is it? and (*b*) What are its aims?"—*The Star* (Dec. 29).

"To Enlighten the Indian Government and the British People."—*Eastern Daily Press.*

Every year sees more excitement over this gathering of loyal and devoted adherents to British rule, who feel they have a right to be heard, to discuss their grievances, and to enlighten the Indian Government and the British people as to their opinions and sentiments. The native mind cannot be gauged in the bazaars, and it cannot be safely left unknown as a sealed book. It is our duty, as responsible persons, to take into account the wishes and views of the two hundred and eighty millions of people over whom we exercise a more or less despotic but, on the whole, a humane rule. It is of the utmost importance that public affairs in India should not be left to the official class, and should not be tinged by any of the prejudices of race or religion. The Congress is a surety that such misfortunes will not happen, and that calm and orderly expression of opinion shall take place. The opponents of the Congress in this country are too apt to take the official view, and to regard the meetings as mere displays of incoherent babble and veiled sedition. It is time we got rid of these false impressions, and to recognise the fact that the natives have a right to co-operate in the government of the country in any and every way they can.—*Eastern Daily Press* (December 30).

"A Barometer."—*Western Daily Mercury.*

The Congress serves its purpose very well indeed. It does not pretend to be anything more than an informal Parliament. It keeps within the bounds of strict legality. It fuses the classes and races of India in a way that nothing else does. It brings excellent native leaders to the front. It enables the Indian Government to see the dangers ahead, and it stimulates its wise men to renewed exertions in the way of economy, justice, and more perfect administration. If we have reason to be proud of our rule in India, and we are anxious to make it better every year, we ought to be thankful for such a barometer as the native Congress supplies. It cannot matter whether we are Liberals or Conservatives, because our self-gratulations about India are much the same; and hence we should turn a kindly ear to what is said at Calcutta, and treat with respect the delegates who have been sent there.—*Western Daily Mercury* (December 30).

"Represents the Whole Body of Educated Native Opinion."

What is the Indian Congress *in esse* and *in posse*? To-day it represents, and fairly represents, practically the whole body of educated native opinion—outside a few unimportant persons to whom the smile of a Government officer or the hall-mark of official recognition appear the sole passports to social happiness. To-morrow it may represent with an unanimity we in England can hardly conceive, the hopes and aspirations of the masses of the Indian peoples. The Congress is now well established. Year after year, in some one of the principal cities of India, now in Lahore, now in Bombay, now in Madras, anon in Allahabad, this year in Calcutta, the delegates of educated India assemble in hundreds to discuss political questions and to ask for redress of those grievances which exist even under the wisest system of government ever devised by the wit of man. For weeks before the Congress meets, all over the great peninsula, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from the Indus to the Ganges, men meet together to elect their representatives to the great national gathering. Every year with slowly-spreading education the constituencies are larger; every year Congress becomes the more authoritative exponent of a larger body of public opinion. It has survived the excesses of enthusiasm at its birth, it has beaten back the assaults of its numerous enemies, it has safely passed the numbing stage of inevitable reaction, it has become an institution which only the folly of a Government bent on self-destruction can turn to harm, and which sympathetically dealt with will become a mighty instrument for good. —*Daily Chronicle* (December 30).

The true significance of the Congress.

At present, unfortunately, the path of reform is blocked by ignorance. The English public knows nothing about the true state of affairs in India. Anglo-Indian officials, who are trained to believe that India can only be ruled by a paternal Government and that the present system is perfect, naturally look askance upon a Congress which suggests, in firm but moderate terms, that there are very serious defects in the system, and that India may claim a larger share in the management of her own affairs. The Tory press follows the lead set by the official class, and spares no pains to abuse and ridicule the movement. We have been told within the last few weeks that the Congress is "a combination of Baboo vanity and intrigue with English twaddle," and "an essentially silly business" that "seems to be approaching an end worthy of its life." This kind of writing defeats its own object, but the few English Liberals, such as Mr. Caine and Sir W. Wedderburn, who have devoted themselves to the task of bringing the grievances of India before the English public, have not yet received as much support even from their own party as they deserve. Surely it is time that the true significance of the National Congress was realised in England, and that the work of reforming the administration of India was begun in serious earnest.—*Manchester Guardian* (January 2nd).

"Jabberjee would-be M.P."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

The so-called Indian National Congress met yesterday, we are told, in exceptionally difficult circumstances. There was the famine and there was the plague. We confess to an inability to perceive exactly how these deterrents operated on the delegates. . . . . The numbers of the delegates—700 arrived and 350 more expected—prove what most people knew before, that Jabberjee would-be M.P. likes to hear himself conversing. . . . . There remains the melancholy fact that it is neither Indian nor national; that it is merely a scratch collection of educated natives, and that they are a mere handful in comparison with the millions of peasantry. If the Congress was content to describe itself as a trade union it would be innocent enough. Regarded as a chrysalis House of Commons, it is a most monstrous sham. . . . . The Congress knows no more about the peasantry of India than a Whitechapel Jew of the crofter question. Jabberjee would-be M.P. may accordingly be left to run his little debating society much as the Parliament of Peckham, if there is one, conducts its innocuous but unnecessary investigation of the affairs of the Empire.—*Pall Mall Gazette* (December 29.)

"The Irrepressible Baboo."—*Glasgow Herald.*

"The Indian National Congress has, after all, been able to assemble this year. If, as is probable, this twelfth Congress is the last, there is something fitting in the fact that it should be held in Calcutta, the happy hunting-ground of the irrepressible Baboo. Yet it is noteworthy that while this Congress is without a British President—although Mr. W. S. Caine is still in India—it is also noteworthy for the absence of the Baboo. At all events, the Mussulmans were most strongly in evidence on the opening day, the proceedings of which were presided over by a native member of the Viceregal Council. Too much, however, need not be made out of the presence of native members of the Government at a gathering which is supposed to be leading up to a policy of Home Rule for India. None probably know better than these Mussulman gentlemen how impossible such a policy is, and it is, on the whole, gratifying to find Mussulmans of eminence displacing the loquacious, self-confident, and self-seeking Baboo in the Councils of the Congress—at all events, if the Congress is to survive the present year, which is doubtful."—*Glasgow Herald* (December 29).

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